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Judge rejects grandmother's plea to remove child from sect with history of child abuse

Boy, 3, to stay with mother in love cult

By Emma Wilkins

A YOUNG mother was yesterday given a judge's blessing to bring up her three-year-old son in a free-love religious cult with a history of child abuse.

But the boy, who lives in a commune with members of a group formerly known as The Children of God, must have regular contact with his grandmother in case he wants to leave when he grows up, Lord Justice Ward said.

The judge decided that group, now called The Family, was no longer responsible for the sexual and physical abuse of children. But he insisted that the 27-year-old mother and The Family's leaders must renounce the teachings of their late leader, David Berg, who promoted incest, prostitution and sex with children.

The ruling came at the end of the longest wardship hearing ever heard in the High Court in London and the judgment, made public yesterday, ran to 135,000 words. In it, Lord Justice Ward said The Family must face up to the shameful period in the 1970s and 80s when child sex abuse was commonplace.

Granting the mother care and control of her son, the judge said the child would remain a ward of court and must live within the court's jurisdiction so that his progress can be monitored.

Lord Justice Ward praised the fortitude of the boy's 53-year-old grandmother, who successfully applied to have



Lord Justice Ward: "sect has changed"

the child made a ward of court when he was eight days old. Both women had the child's best interests at heart, he said.

The grandmother later issued a statement saying: "I am glad that the court has recognised my concerns for my grandchild and that the wardship will continue. I never wanted and do not want to separate my grandchild from his mother."

The judgment was, however, condemned by Ian Haworth of the Cult Information Service, who said: "I am very concerned for the child and extremely surprised by the judgment. The decision to leave the child within the group has upset me. I only hope the grandmother will be able to monitor the child's future and protect him."

Mr Haworth added: "I am very worried that the judge

seems to believe there has been a major change in the group's behaviour. I am not aware of any change, except the change in their name."

The judge ruled that the mother, who gave birth to a second son earlier this year, must undertake never to live apart from the elder boy for more than two weeks, and she may leave him with other commune members for up to three days only three times a year. She must also forbid anyone from hitting him, placing him in isolation or forcing him to be silent — all common forms of punishment within The Family, which has been known to beat children with sticks, canes and cricket bats.

Lord Justice Ward said the most difficult condition would be the denunciation of Berg, who died last year aged 75: "They must acknowledge that through his writings he was personally responsible for children in The Family having been subjected to sexually inappropriate behaviour."

The Family must be encouraged honestly to face up to this shameful period in their history so that those harmed by it, victims and perpetrators alike, can seek to come to terms with it.

"For an honest memorial to be given to David Berg, this dark side to his character must be revealed. By all means let thanks be given also for the good he did — as I accept he did for many — and



Gideon and Rachel Scott with some of their 12 children opened their communal home yesterday to describe The Family sect. Details: page 3

for the inspiration he has been to those who through him have devoted their lives to the service of the Lord."

The judge said that ten or even five years ago he would not have allowed a child to remain within The Family, which has about 15,000 members, including 100 adults and 194 children in Britain.

"This grandmother has done a public service by exposing their pernicious practices at that time. But

times have changed and so have The Family. They have come in from the cold. They can carry some mud from the past on their coat but if they choose, they can wash it off. Then they can sit at society's supper table, eccentric guests perhaps, but welcome for all that."

In his judgment, Lord Justice Ward catalogued the depraved teachings of Berg, who founded the cult in 1968 among hippies in California.

Sexuality in children was encouraged virtually from babyhood, as was sex between children and between children and adults. But the judge said the Law of Love, the group's main tenet of free love, was a pernicious doctrine which robbed children of their childhood.

Women were also told to go "filthy fishing" — recruiting new members by offering sex — although Berg himself outlawed the practice in 1987 with

the onset of Aids. This was condemned as common prostitution by the judge, who said the "Jesus babies" born as a result would suffer deep distress when they learnt the truth.

In considering the case, the judge heard evidence from seven expert witnesses and sought assistance from social services staff, who made surprise visits to the boy and his mother at the commune. Social workers found that the

group's 20 children were happy and well adjusted.

The Family has communes in the south of England, the Midlands — including its HQ near Leicester — and Glasgow. Police in Australia and France raided cult homes in 1992 and 1993 and 220 children were taken into care, but they were later all returned when no evidence of wrongdoing was found.

Malign influence, page 3

French strike hits travellers

Thousands of travellers setting out for France yesterday were hit by a 24-hour strike of public sector workers that halted the country's trains, docks and airports.

Cross-Channel ferry services were suspended or diverted to Belgium, several Eurostar train services were cancelled and flights were disrupted. Two of the most powerful unions have called for a general strike next Tuesday. Page 14

Princess pays visit to Menem

The Princess of Wales and President Menem shook hands in Buenos Aires yesterday in a clear signal of the thaw in relations between Britain and Argentina.

Earlier, when the Princess was visiting a hospital, she was subjected to shouts of abuse from an elderly Argentinian woman whose son died in the Falklands War. Page 5

Hampers herald Christmas boom

By Russell Jenkins and Robin Young

RECORD sales for old-fashioned Christmas hampers are fuelling what many retailers now believe will be the freest-spending Christmas for a decade.

Marks & Spencer's best-selling hamper is the Luxury Collection at £100, containing champagne, white burgundy, claret, port, Christmas cake and pudding, chocolates, biscuits, bottled fruits, chutney, tea and coffee. Not far behind is an even more lavish Connoisseur Collection at £160. "We are constantly busy taking orders at all our stores and by telephone", a spokeswoman said.

Fortnum & Mason, which expects to sell 80,000 hampers and gift boxes, has sold out of

the Roxburgh, at £250 its highest priced hamper for export.

The best-selling hamper from Fortnum's range of more than 40 is the Oxford, priced at £100 and packed with wines, pudding, brandy butter, duck pâté, creamed smoked salmon, preserves, and rich fruit cake with cherry brandy.

Harrods has sold 16,000 hampers priced at up to £1,000, with thousands more by mail order. Orders are running 15 per cent ahead of last year, a spokesman said last night. Harrods' fastest

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Christmas Food & Drink, Magazine, page 59

British Rail heads for end of the line in new year

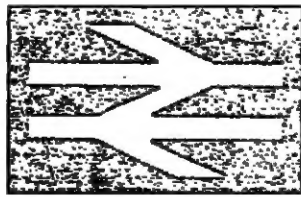
By Jonathan Prynn
TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH RAIL, one of the most pilloried but familiar features of postwar life, is to be killed off on January 7.

The title will disappear from the 250 million passenger tickets issued annually, 48 years after the industry was nationalised by Clement Attlee's Labour Government. The new name for the network is to be National Railways.

Stickers will be issued to cover up references to BR on posters. The name has been progressively erased from signs and publicity material since the late 1980s.

Most advertising and marketing already refers to the 25 new rail operators, such as



East Coast, South West Trains and Chiltern. The "double arrow" logo, which dates from 1964, will, however, survive for a time, mainly on road signs.

Existing stocks of tickets bearing the BR name will be used before the new versions are phased in. For some less-regularly used services this could take decades.

The industry was known as British Railways between nationalisation in 1948 and 1964.

The trading name was then changed to British Rail and became better known as BR. However, the top management body is still called the British Railways Board.

Steve Wilkinson of the Railway Development Society, one of many enthusiast groups campaigning against privatisation, condemned the change as ludicrous. "How many people did it take to come up with National Railways? It hasn't even got British in it," he said. "It will be a long time before people stop calling it British Rail."

Until privatisation is completed, the new operating companies will still be owned by the British Railways Board.

Court challenge, page 2

Girl who danced with the Prince of Wales dies

By Joe Joseph

EDNA Deane, the British queen of pre-war ballroom dance whom Fred Astaire hailed as "authentic poetry in motion", has died.

Although long confined to her home in Rottingdean with osteoporosis, her 90th birthday last month still triggered a wave of tributes and a fresh flood of fan mail. The woman who inspired the song, *I danced with a man who danced with a girl who danced with the Prince of Wales*, observed: "The life of a dancer is not a long one. But true dancers are born, not taught, and none of us ever really stops. I still dance — in my heart."

Deane's famed grace and poise earned her not only the British but also the world ballroom crown. Blonde, beautiful and charming, she also swept the then Prince of Wales, later the Duke of Windsor, off his feet. Fred Astaire, who ought to know, rated her Britain's most astounding female dancer. By the mid-1920s she was as celebrated as any film or stage star. It was when her beauty caught the eye of the Prince of Wales, who danced with her nine times in one evening at the Ascot Cabaret Ball, that she became the inspiration of the improbably convoluted popular song, *I danced with a man who danced with a girl who danced with the Prince of Wales*.

In 1929, she became the British foxtrot champion. It was when she was starring at the London Palladium, billed as "The Queen of Dance", that Fred Astaire first saw her dance.

The year 1933 was Deane's professional pinnacle. In the space of 12 months she and her partner, Timothy Palmer, won both the British and world professional ballroom dancing championships. But in 1935 she married a London barrister and went into semi-retirement. "The lights of London have dimmed," Lord Castlereagh, of the *Sunday Express* lamented. "The divine Edna is lost to us."



Obituary, page 23

Deane with Timothy Palmer

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Miss Living on the Beat

Mr Worth A Bundle



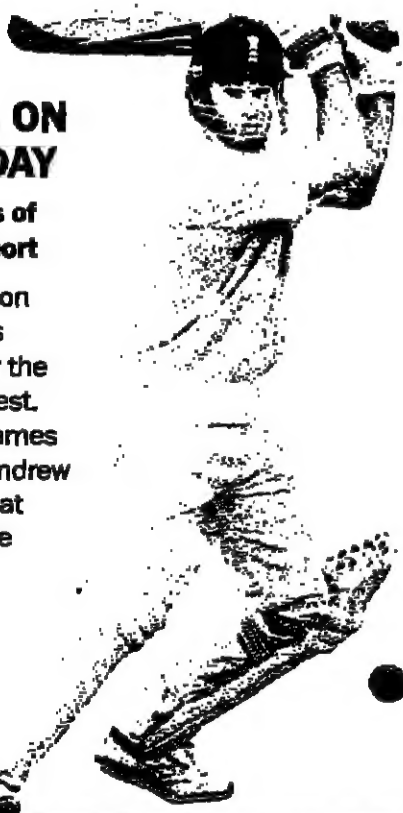
Mr Worth A Bundle

JOHN REDWOOD

What would be in my Budget

Full page, at-a-glance checklist, on Tuesday

Twelve-page guide to winners and losers in Budget 95, on Wednesday

PLUS, ON
MONDAY12 pages of
Times SportAlan Lee on
England's
shape for the
second Test.
Simon Barnes
on Rob Andrew
in action at
NewcastleEVERY DAY NEXT WEEK:
A HOLIDAY FOR TWO TO BE WON

Victor for privatisation opponents days before franchises are transferred

Judge grants right to challenge BR sale

By JONATHAN PRYNN
TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

THE privatisation of British Rail was thrown into confusion yesterday when campaigners won the right to challenge it in the courts.

The High Court ruling came days before the first franchise contracts transferring passenger train services to private companies were due to be signed by the Government.

The decision by Mr Justice Brooke allows the Save Our Railways lobby group to seek a judicial review of the sale of passenger services on the ground that they could lead to cuts in services. Although in the meantime the sales could still go ahead, the decision adds further uncertainty to a privatisation that has run into a

series of problems since it began nearly two years ago.

It could also jeopardise the Government's planned £15 billion City flotation of Railtrack next spring, which could help pave the way for pre-election tax cuts.

Labour and the rail unions hailed the victory and called on Sir George Young, the Transport Secretary, to ditch the sale altogether.

Jimmy Knapp, general secretary of the RMT rail union, said after the hearing: "This is a tremendous victory for rail users all around the country. The court has exposed the mythology called the franchise of passenger services as a dupe to secure severe cuts."

Clare Short, the Shadow Transport Secretary, said: "This decision is

another illustration of the continuing shambles of rail privatisation. The case will cost the Government time and effort that should be spent on securing the future of the railways."

Jonathan Bray, co-ordinator of Save Our Railways, was jubilant, claiming that the judgment was "good news for the many commuters and councils that have seen their rail services slashed."

However, legal experts on privatisation said last night the challengers still faced an "uphill struggle" in halting privatisation, and could face damages running to millions of pounds if they succeeded in securing an injunction. If the court did rule that the Passenger Service Requirements had been set unlawfully, it was open to Sir George to provide more

subsidy to allow bidders to operate the existing timetable. Mark Swindell, of the law firm Dobb Lupton Broomhead, said:

The Save Our Railways group, which is backed by rail unions and 19 local authorities, argued that Roger Salmon, the government-appointed rail franchise director, had acted unlawfully in allowing private franchise operators to make cuts in services of up to 20 per cent when they take over from British Rail.

Under the Passenger Service Requirements set by Mr Salmon's office, private bidders are only required to run certain specified services, although it is hoped that, in practice, they will increase them.

Roger Salmon put a brave face on the court decision last night and said

it would not hold back the privatisation. "I am satisfied that the Public Service Requirements which I have set are in accordance with the objectives, instructions and guidance issued to me as franchise director by the Transport Secretary."

Today's hearing merely ascertained that there is a point to be argued and not the merits of the argument. The Office of Passenger Rail Franchising will strenuously defend its position at the judicial review.

A spokesman for the Department of Transport insisted it was "business as usual for rail privatisation" and said the decision would not affect the franchising process. "There is a clear framework for rail franchising laid down in the Railways Act," he said.

IRA 'preparing to resume war' if peace talks fail

By NICHOLAS WATT AND JILL SHERMAN

THE IRA has told its members to prepare for a "return to war" if London and Dublin fail to break the current impasse in the Northern Ireland peace process, according to security sources in the Province.

IRA leaders, who have become exasperated with the slow pace of the process, are understood to be examining a number of options for resuming their terrorist campaign. These include launching attacks in England on economic targets or striking at figures in the Establishment.

Security sources in Northern Ireland believe that the IRA leadership has informed its key volunteers of its plans to resume violence if Britain refuses to lay the basis for all-party talks in the wake of President Clinton's visit to Northern Ireland next Thursday.

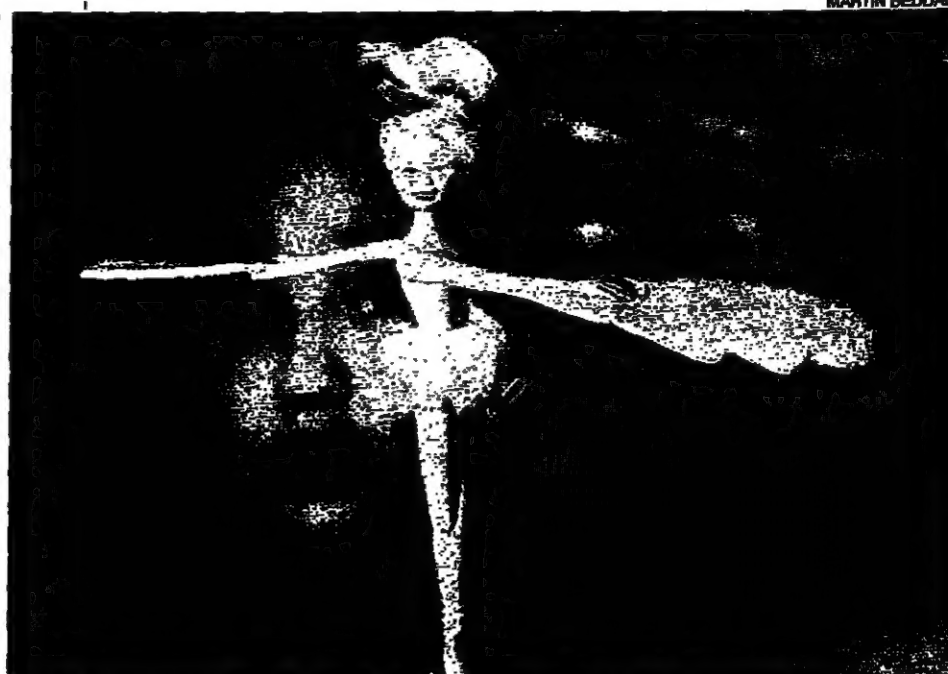
One senior security source, who adopted an optimistic outlook in the first year of the ceasefire, fears that IRA violence could resume in the new year. The threat of a return to terrorism emerged as John Major and John Bruton failed to resolve their differences in a 40-minute telephone conversation yesterday. In their fourth contact in as many days the two Prime Ministers were said to have made only a little headway on the issue of disarming the IRA.

Downing Street officials claimed there had been "some progress" during a "useful exchange" but signalled that an Anglo-Irish summit before President Clinton's visit now looked increasingly unlikely.

The deadlock between London and Dublin led Gerry Adams to say yesterday that the peace process was over. Speaking in Belfast the Sinn Féin president said: "Most nationalists and republicans, with some disbelief and with some fear, feel it is over. That is my sense, that is the sense on the streets."

Ministers say that Mr Adams' threat reinforces the importance of responding to the ceasefire cautiously and insisting on the decommissioning of IRA arms. However, a senior Irish official said that the threat of renewed violence undermined the importance of speeding the response in order to lock Sinn Féin into mainstream politics.

Leading article, page 21



The soaraway Sky Dancers, at £12.99, tipped to be the Christmas best-seller

Christmas shopping takes off

Continued from page 1
seller is the Enslinmore, at £60, which does not contain wines but adds vanilla fudge, cranberry sauce and Gentlemen's Relish to its list of delicacies.

For once, also, traditional toys are outselling film and television spin-offs. This year's flyaway toy, the present parents must have in their children's stockings, according to Hamleys, the world's biggest toy store, is an airborne fairies with a resemblance to the ancient spinning top. Sky Dancers sell at £12.99 a set.

Bubbaloo Bird, a marionette soft toy which looks like Sesame Street's Big Bird, is also flying off the shelves. Hamleys are selling 300 a week at £9.99.

In London up to one million people will be on Regent Street and Oxford Street tomorrow for the Grand Christmas Parade, masterminded by the American Don Whitley, choreographer for the Olympic parade in Atlanta.

Shopping centres around the country confirm that customers are already out in large

numbers. George MacDonal, centre manager at Eldon Square in Newcastle upon Tyne, said: "Spending is buoyant and we are really motorising now."

A spokesman for the MetroCentre, Gateshead, said: "We are already running 3 per cent up on last year." The Lakeside Shopping Centre at Thurrock in Essex said: "This and next weekend will our busiest of the year."

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ID cards 'to be voluntary'

By NICHOLAS WOOD, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

MICHAEL HOWARD is close to abandoning plans for compulsory identity cards. However, the Home Secretary is expected to announce early next year the go-ahead for a voluntary scheme based on the planned plastic photocard driving licences.

Both Mr Howard and John Major believe a compulsory card would help to fight crime. But they have run into opposition from Cabinet champions of civil liberties, such as Peter Lilley and Michael Forsyth.

A compulsory card would require penalties for people

who failed to carry them and produce them on demand from the police. Ministerial critics say that creating an offence of "failing to produce your papers" would run counter to traditional British ideas of personal liberty.

Home Office officials are continuing to study the results of the summer consultation exercise on introducing ID cards but are drawing back from compulsion.

Photocard driving licences could double as a voluntary ID card with non-drivers entitled to such a card for identity purposes. These are due to be

introduced next July provided they are approved by European Union transport ministers meeting next month. The cards, it is hoped, would make many daily transactions more convenient and reduce fraud and under-age drinking.

Mr Howard was under fire from ethnic minority groups last night after refusing to sign a European convention outlawing racism and xenophobia. The Home Secretary argued that Britain already had effective race relations laws and good race relations. He wants the convention to be rewritten.

Mural unveiled with high hopes

A PLAYGROUND mural bringing inspiration and hope to an inner-city area rife with racial violence was unveiled yesterday (Ian Murray writes). The painting was created by Karen Gregory, a local artist, on the side of St Mary and St Pancras Primary School in Somers Town, north London. It celebrates the many famous literary names and social reformers including Charles Dickens who once lived in the area. It also depicts an ethnic mix of people working on a community project. Miss Gregory originally

painted the mural - in the styles of Stubbs, Gainsborough, Ford Maddox Brown, Sickert and Gilman - in 1980. But it faded and two years ago was hidden forever behind flats for the disabled.

It has been recreated largely through the enthusiasm of Claire Tomalin, the biographer, who came to know Somers Town while researching her book on Mary Wollstonecraft, the 18th-century women's rights pioneer and mother of Mary Shelley.

Photograph, page 24

Post Office workers back strike

A mass meeting of Post Office workers yesterday voted unanimously to continue their unofficial industrial action in Scotland. Some postal employees who balloted on action recently began an official strike yesterday, but mail has also been hit by unofficial strike action.

Union officials claim that changes to working patterns introduced in Edinburgh threaten the future of second deliveries and fear jobs are at risk as a result.

Lamont shunned

Norman Lamont has lost another chance to find a safe seat at the next election by failing to reach the final three for the North West Hampshire constituency. The former Chancellor, whose Kingston upon Thames seat disappears under boundary changes, lost out to Sir George Young, the Transport Secretary.

Owen elected

Lord Owen, the former SDP leader, was elected Chancellor of the University of Liverpool yesterday to replace Sir Alastair Pilkington, who died in May. The election at the annual meeting of the Court is subject to the approval of the Queen, who is Visitor of the University.

Abduction claim

Sue O'Brien, who was ordered by a British court to live in Greece to give her estranged husband access to their four children, claims that he has abducted two of them. Ms O'Brien says Nikos Balassinas vanished with Zoe, 4, and Athanasios, 22 months, on Wednesday.

Robbers jailed

A prostitute was jailed for six years at the Old Bailey for robbing a civil servant who was kept bound and gagged for three days while his home was ransacked. Katrina Moseley, 22, of Wolverhampton, was aided by her boyfriend, Mark Reid, 28, who was jailed for eight years.

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NATIONAL
SAVINGS

'Sex with children was wrong. It will never be allowed to happen again'

Communities live on love and donations

By KATHRYN KNIGHT

GIDEON SCOTT and his wife Rachel, self-styled spokesmen for The Family, yesterday compared their community of 35 children and adults to a monastery. Sitting in the television lounge of one of the group's homes in the village of Dunton Bassett, 15 miles from Leicester, Mr and Mrs Scott admitted that sex between any consenting adults was acceptable but insisted that sexual relations with children would never happen again.

The sect has renounced David Berg's teaching on child sexuality. Mr Scott said, Berg's most disturbing work reflected on the sexuality of children.

The Hollywood actor River Phoenix, reared by the Children of God, used to say he lost his virginity at the age of four. Phoenix died at the age of 23 of a drug overdose two years ago. "He [Berg] himself has said he was wrong. It will never happen again," Mr Scott said.

The Scotts, both 44, have produced 12 children and four grandchildren in 23 years. Their son Jeremy is six months old. They abandoned their real names of Martin and Linda in favour of the biblical Rachel and Gideon.

They live at a rented manor house with three other families including 15 children



Gideon and Rachel Scott: changed their names

aged under 16. They invite the vicar for tea and biscuits, host a carol service for villagers at Christmas and join worshippers for Easter ceremonies in the parish church. But all traces of Berg have not been eradicated.

In the hallway of the sprawling redbrick house, a leaflet entitled *Eulogy to David Berg*, by his daughter Faith, lies on the table. The leaflet praises Berg's love, compassion and wisdom.

Children sleep in bunk beds in pleasant rooms, some of which double as classrooms. The Family believe in corporal punishment but insist no child receives "excess" punishment. "As Christian parents we still believe there is a place for corporal punishment with relation to children within very strict guidelines. We believe it can help them but it is of

limited use." They have a strict 15-hour timetable of prayers, work, activity and parental association which is followed each day.

None of them goes to school and all are taught by the sect members. All children and adults rise at seven in the morning and eat breakfast together before pursuing their daily activities.

Children are divided into prayer groups according to their age and are allotted prayer time before, during and after the day's lessons. The daily timetable is interspersed with activity periods of outdoor play and association periods, when the children spend time with their parents.

The families eat dinner together with the rest of the group and most of the younger children are in bed by 9.30pm

after a final prayer session. None of the adults works and their only comes from donations. Mr Scott said these stemmed from former members, and from sales of books and videos like *The Family* video, the cover of which claims the group is a "volunteer community motivated by God's love to help others".

There are 165 other cult members in communities throughout Britain and two-thirds of them are children. Other communities exist in Scotland, Ireland and Kent.

Mr Scott said The Family was against casual sex. "We believe that loving relationships are covered by God's injunction to do unto others as others do unto you, but any relationship without love is not a good idea, so a casual relationship is not a good idea."

Cult members are no longer allowed sexual contact with people outside The Family, but young people could readily find partners within the network of the group in Britain and abroad, Mr Scott said.

Talking to our teenagers, it sometimes seems like The Family is a holiday club as far as they're concerned. They travel extensively throughout Europe and other countries and are always meeting other young people. They correspond and they have no trouble finding partners."



Kristina Jones, who was awarded £5,000 compensation for criminal injuries

Follower describes childhood of abuse

By DOMINIC KENNEDY

KRISTINA JONES was awarded £5,000 by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board last year after reporting that she had been sexually and mentally abused from the age of three by followers of the sect. She was born into the Children of God and said she was molested by at least 25 men in Britain and India before leaving at the age of 12. She cannot identify her attackers because cult members constantly change their names after the example of Saul becoming Paul in the Bible.

Miss Jones had sexual intercourse with men because she was too frightened to refuse and was told it was God's will. "I realise now that it was rape because it wasn't with my consent, but at the time I thought it was normal everyday life," she said.

"If I refused I would be accused of being 'out of the spirit', as they called it, and punished... I had to prove myself as being unselfish, as Berg wanted all women to be. Punishments were designed to be humiliating and emotionally traumatic."

Miss Jones blames the sect for her present status as a 19-year-old single mother of a three-year-old son. "I didn't know how to say no to sex because it was never instilled into me as a child," she said.

Judge condemns cult's founder as perverted and malign influence

By EMMA WILKINS

THE founder of the Children of God religious cult was a perverted and malign influence on his gullible followers, Lord Justice Ward said in his 314-page judgment.

The judge, who was presiding over Britain's longest wardship hearing, summoned witnesses from within the movement, former members and expert witnesses in child psychology. He made it clear that the child's mother and grandmother both wanted the best interests of the boy to be paramount. "Each has never flinched or contemplated surrender in this titanic struggle to secure the care and control of the much-loved child in question," the judge said.

The judge praised the grandmother, 58, who wanted to take S to Kenya, where she planned to employ a nanny and later arrange for his education in England. The child was made a ward of court eight days after his birth in 1992 at the grandmother's request.

"The suggestion is made on behalf of The Family that the plaintiff is a mere tool and dupe of the anti-cult movement. I reject that submission. She is a remarkably strong and determined lady who, having embarked on this campaign, has carried it through when many lesser individuals would have folded under the strain."

Lord Justice Ward was severely critical of David "Moses" Berg, who founded the Children of God movement in 1968. Berg was "a man without judgment or moral scruple, and a malign corrupting influence on his susceptible followers," the judge said.

He heard evidence of Berg's perverted views on child sex. In one pamphlet, Berg wrote that young children should be encouraged to explore their naked bodies and play together

er. In what the judge described as pornographic literature, Berg illustrated his articles of faith with hand-drawings of naked women.

The judge described the Law of Love, which urges free love, as a "pernicious doctrine". He said: "In liberating the ordinary sexual inhibitions, the Law of Love empowers those with strong sexual urges but poor judgment to act indiscriminately and it puts pressure on the weak to succumb to that which does in fact harm them."

The judge condemned the practice of "flirty fishing", by



Berg founded the movement in 1968

which women members seduced men in pubs and clubs in the hunt for new recruits to the cult. The practice was nothing short of prostitution, the judge said, with Berg and his acolytes living off the proceeds.

With the advent of AIDS, "flirty fishing" was outlawed, according to a directive from Berg in 1987. "I am satisfied that it has ceased and I judge there to be no substantial risk that it will be resumed," said the judge.

While the mother had slept with married men in the cult, the judge said he was con-

dent that she was discreet. "Although she, like all members of the movement, cults in the glory of their sexual freedom so that she, like all others, proclaims there is nothing wrong with sex, I accept her protestation that she will not knowingly permit her son to be a witness to sexual activity." The judge condemned the practices of the 1970s and 1980s, when it was commonplace for children to witness adults having intercourse.

The judge said that the movement had now made determined and sustained attempts to eradicate child abuse, which had been widespread in the 70s and 80s. "It was a deplorable period of their history. They have been rightly vilified by the media and pilloried by the press."

After hearing evidence from expert witnesses, the judge said he was convinced that the movement could accommodate change. The crucial event in this process was the death last year of Berg, the judge said. "The original 'one man hand' dictatorship has become more democratic, arriving at decisions after consultation and by consensus."

The judge expressed some doubts about the mother's ability to renounce Berg. However, when calling the mother before him earlier this month after a year's absence, the judge was impressed. "This was not the sullen young woman of last year. She showed a readiness to admit past error that has been wholly lacking until now. More importantly she showed a certain insight that frankly surprised me."

"I find she is conscious of the dangers that zealots within The Family may sacrifice the rights of children on a false altar of misconceived service. I am satisfied that she will protect him from the excesses of the group."

Expert witnesses fail to agree

By EMMA WILKINS

THE judge called on seven expert witnesses to advise him on the psychology of the commune and its possible effects on the boy.

Professor James Richardson, Professor of Sociology and Judicial Studies at the University of Nevada, became interested in the Children of God in the 1970s. Professor Richardson's evidence suggested that The Family had developed "a relatively stable pattern of managing sexuality" but he acknowledged that some children were sexually abused.

Dr Susan Palmer, a part-time lecturer in the Department of Religion at Concordia University, Montreal, interviewed 45 members and ex-members

and concluded that young people could easily leave the cult if they wished, but the judge expressed his reservations about this aspect of her evidence. She said that children were happy.

Dr Gordon Melton, director of the Institute for the Study of American Religion, who has monitored the Children of God since the 1970s, found no evidence of child abuse.

The Rev Dr David Millikan, a minister of the Uniting Church in Australia who has monitored the emergence of religious movements there over 20 years, was critical of members' blind faith in David Berg's writings but urged tolerance.

Dr Lawrence Lilliston, a clinical child psychologist with 30 years' experience, saw about

200 children from five homes in America and three in England and found that the children were healthy and stable.

Dr Michael Heller, a consultant psychiatrist and a frequent witness in the Family Division, was called by the mother. He found that S was a normal and polite child.

Dr Hamish Cameron, a consultant child psychiatrist who was called by the Official Solicitor — representing S — said S was a delightful boy. His emotional ties to his mother were less intense than in a normal family, as they were shared around the group who care for him. While acknowledging that there could be future risks of abuse, Dr Cameron urged a "wait and see" approach.

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Presidential ambition deftly thwarted by a royal with the stature for the occasion

Princess ducks out of an awkward situation

FROM ALAN HAMILTON
IN BUENOS AIRES

THE Princess of Wales clearly saw eye to eye with President Menem of Argentina yesterday, but only when they sat down to lunch.

Any pretence that her South American tour was nothing more than an unofficial working visit to medical charities evaporated when the Princess arrived at the Presidential Palace in the opulent Buenos Aires suburb of Olivos. The President likes to boost his electoral appeal by being seen with beautiful women.

Unfortunately the President stands at 5ft 3in in his socks, although his frequent use of platform shoes increases his altitude by an inch or so. The Princess reaches 5ft 10in, not counting an inch or more of hair. The discrepancy was made the worse as the pair posed for photographs by the Princess being in high heels and the President in flaties.

The Argentinian cameramen whipped themselves to a frenzy in their desire for some show, however small, of Latin passion. "Presidente, Presidente, un beso a la mano," they yelled. The President appeared momentarily uncertain of the protocol. The Princess's interpreter scurried



Smiling but not kissing for the cameras, the Princess maintains protocol with President Menem, escorted by his daughter Zulemita, right

forward. "They want him to kiss your hand," she whispered. The Princess laughed merrily. "No," she said firmly. Moments later the President thought he should at least shake his guest's hand, and extended a wary palm. The Princess looked a little edgy. Would he insist on that

kiss? She offered a tentative paw. They shook. Relief all round.

□ The Princess of Wales came face to face with the lingering bitterness of the Falklands conflict yesterday. As she arrived at a cancer hospital in Buenos Aires an elderly woman yelled abuse at her.

Lucia Mastrolani, 70, was restrained by security staff and taken into the hospital well away from the official party.

She told reporters that her son, a doctor, had been conscripted into the Argentine navy in 1982, and had died in the sinking of the *Belgrano*.

Her husband had attended a military ceremony at which their son was to be posthumously decorated but insulted senior military figures by telling them: "Keep your flag and medals; I want my son back."

Shortly afterwards her husband disappeared and was never seen again, joining the

30,000 *desaparecidos* who vanished during the rule of the military junta.

Later, Señora Mastrolani returned to live on their farm in Cordoba province, only to find that it had been seized by the local military governor.

Letters, page 21

Advert for condoms 'insulting to Palace'

By MICHAEL BINYON

THE British Ambassador to Norway has protested strongly over a two-page advertisement for condoms in a leading Oslo newspaper that features a picture of the Princess of Wales with the slogan: "Appearances deceive: use a condom."

Mark Elliott went on television to denounce what he called an "insulting and utterly tasteless" advertisement. Buckingham Palace said yesterday the use of photographs of the Royal Family for commercial purposes was not authorised and has asked the Foreign Office to instruct the Norwegian Government to take up the matter with the Council for Sex Education, which placed the advert.

The colour advertisement in *Dagbladet* for Black Jack condoms said: "It is difficult to see on the outside that a person has had sex with casual partners. It happens in the best of families... There is only one thing that protects you against unwanted pregnancy, Aids and other venereal disease. That is why more and more people think that unprotected sex is an insult. A royal insult, in fact. Appearances deceive. Use a condom."

Norwegians, who have seen this week's *Panorama* interview with the Princess, besieged the newspaper with complaints.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

The world's biggest jewel theft



Germany's priceless royal jewels, handed down by Queen Victoria and Kaiser Bill, disappeared from a secret vault in 1945 when two US army officers got greedy...

An extraordinary tale unfolds, in *The Magazine*

Gates gets domestic

Computer-controlled displays of various sizes will be built into the walls. Even old photographs will be stored digitally and called up on a screen instead of having to sit in a frame...

... Bill Gates is building a new house. An exclusive extract from his book, *The Road Ahead* - in *The Culture*

THE SUNDAY TIMES, TOMORROW

Cocaine plot chiefs jailed for 30 years

By STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

TWO men who organised a £124 million cocaine cargo destined for a network of dealers across Britain were each jailed for 30 years yesterday.

Customs and police officers believe George Sansom, a cousin of the former England footballer Kenny Sanson, and Colin Mulhenns, 42, masterminded the biggest cocaine cargo ever uncovered on its way to Britain. It was meant to be the first of many runs.

Sansom and Mulhenns were members of a big drugs syndicate who had funded the smuggling operation from smaller drug runs. Buyers had already been set up in London, Liverpool and Glasgow. The plan collapsed when customs and police officers sprang an ambush three years ago as the 796 kg cargo

arrived in London on a former oil rig support vessel.

Passing sentence at Snaresbrook Crown Court, east London, Judge Brooks referred to the death of Leah Betts, who took Ecstasy, and said: "Those who choose to become involved in drug trafficking must be told in the clearest possible terms the courts will show little or no mercy."

The judge said Sansom, 42, of Dulwich, southeast London, had been the marketer and Mulhenns, 52, of Twickenham, southwest London, the financier of the enterprise. "In my view you both richly deserve to be sent to prison for the rest of your lives but unfortunately I cannot do this," he said.

The two were part of a plan that involved buying the for-

mer support vessel *Foxtor Five* from a breaker's yard in Louisiana for £200,000. The boat sailed to the coast of Guyana, where the cocaine was loaded, before heading for London. But *Foxtor Five* was tracked by the Royal Navy.

After mooring at Woolwich Reach, a crane lifted a pallet stacked with more than 700 black polythene bags containing the drugs. It was openly reloaded into the back of a van, which drove off to a warehouse in Deptford. Police boarded the boat and others raided the warehouse.

The pair were convicted at Norwich Crown Court last month after the first trial, at Snaresbrook, was halted after suspicions of jury nobbling. The ship's six-man crew were acquitted earlier.

Teacher attacked by freed rapist

A MAN was jailed for nine years yesterday for raping a teacher a month after he was released from jail for attacking another woman. Orlando Baker, 28, had an appalling record of sexual and other violent crime, including rape, the Old Bailey was told.

The jury heard that in May, Baker picked up the teacher, 24, at a west London disco. She had only just arrived in Britain from Australia and was drunk. She said Baker was "extremely charming" and "flattering". Against her better judgment she spent the night in his room at his bail hostel, but next morning, when she had sobered up and asked to go, his attitude changed and he locked her in.

The woman said he threatened to throw her out of a window and grabbed her round the neck. He repeatedly raped her over three hours. "I was very scared," she said.

The court was told that in April 1990 Baker had been jailed for seven years for rape. In that case, his victim was threatened with death and then raped and otherwise



Baker: court told of previous violence

sexually abused. Shortly after his release, upon serving less than half his sentence, Baker was acquitted of raping a 28-year-old woman but jailed for two years after admitting to punching and threatening her. Other convictions for assault dated back to his early teens.

Passing sentence yesterday Judge Coombe said: "I am satisfied there is a pattern of behaviour and that women are in grave danger from you. This was a wicked rape."

Inmate who absconded killed man

By KATE ALDERSON

A PRISONER stabbed a man to death after absconding when he was given a bus ticket to transfer between jails.

Michael Quinn, 26, was jailed for life yesterday after being convicted of murder by Newcastle Crown Court. He had been entrusted to travel from Durham jail to Kirkham open prison, Lancashire, in June 1993.

Quinn, who had 18 months left to serve of a six-year sentence for conspiracy to rob, plotted with Wilf McFarling, 32, his brother-in-law, to rob the Springwell Inn in Wrekenton, Gateshead. But Quinn stabbed Alan Bryant, 50, when he tried to stop the robbery. Mr Bryant, who had been drinking in the pub, died in hospital four weeks later.

Quinn and McFarling, from Gateshead, denied murder. Quinn was given six years concurrent to the life sentence for robbery. McFarling was cleared of murder but convicted of manslaughter. He admitted robbery and will be sentenced on Monday.

Mother's killer gets probation

A MAN who killed his crippled mother as she lay crying in pain was given two years' probation yesterday after pleading guilty to her manslaughter.

Birmingham Crown Court was told that Grenville Barker, 50, was worn out with worry and fatigue over his widowed mother, Emily Barker, Mrs Barker, 85, of Sheldon, Birmingham, was in constant pain from a combination of thrombosis, ulcers and gangrene. She was crippled with arthritis, had been fitted with

a colostomy bag, was overweight and housebound.

Alistair McCreath, for the prosecution, said Barker, of Solihull, West Midlands, had snapped in the early hours on March 5 when his mother had asked him to renew the dressing on sores on her leg. Instead, he wrapped a towel round her head and killed her.

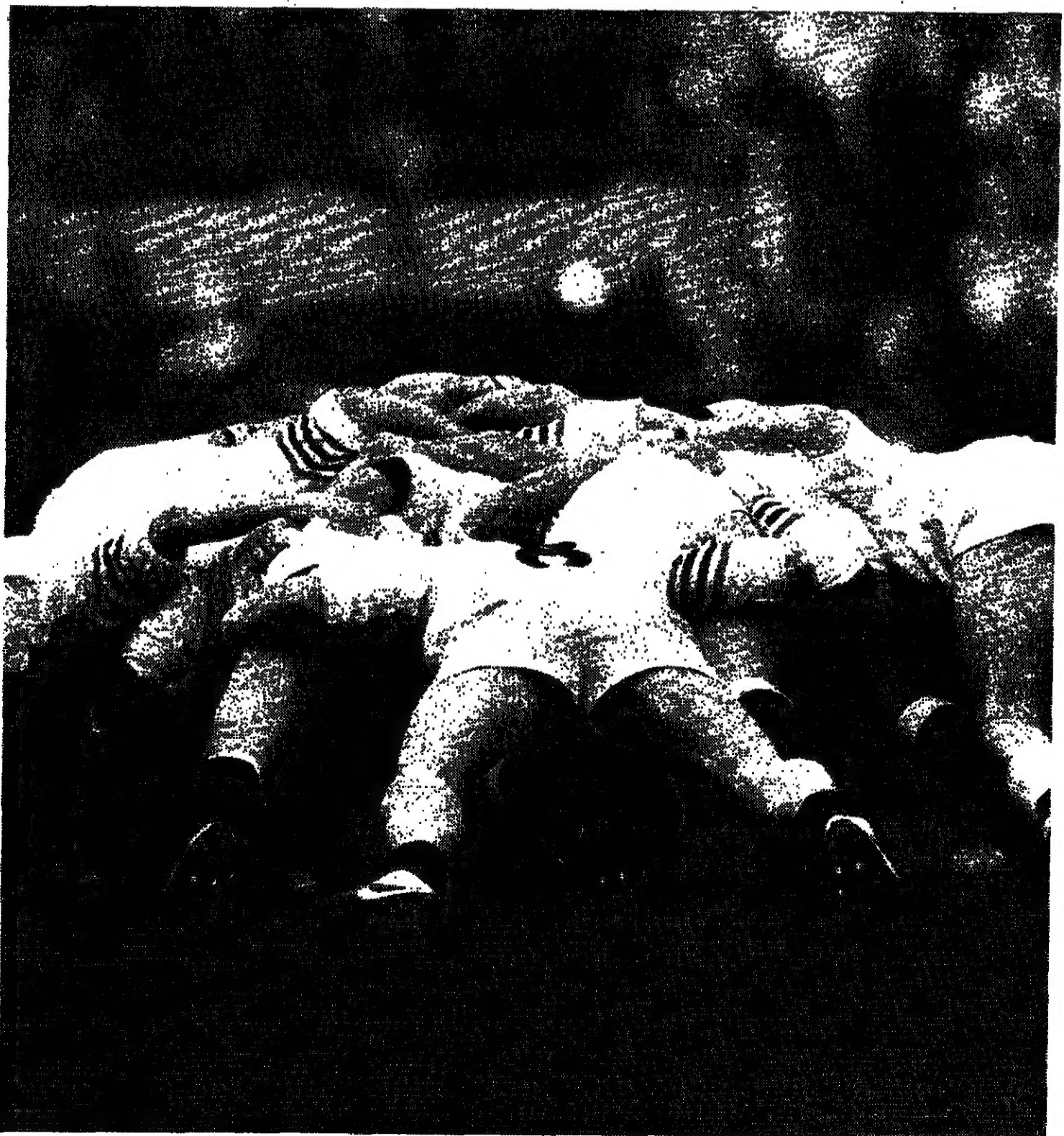
He said: "You will readily understand that this man could not have been in his right mind when he did what he did. His mother was in constant pain and he often had

to pick her up and put her back to bed."

Sentencing Barker, Mr Justice Collins said: "It was not your place to take the life of another human being. Nevertheless, I am well aware of the dreadful pressures that were upon you and more particularly of the dreadful suffering your mother went through in the last weeks of her life. Your responsibility was indeed severely diminished by sleep deprivation and depression from which you were suffering."

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THISTLE

Court backs murder charge Judges strengthen laws protecting unborn children

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

A MAN who stabbed his pregnant girlfriend, causing the death of their baby daughter, should have been charged with murder or manslaughter, the Lord Chief Justice ruled yesterday.

In a decision that creates new legal protection for unborn children, Lord Taylor of Gossforth said the man could not escape liability for the baby's death. The 25-week-old foetus was born prematurely as a result of the stabbing and died four months later. The ruling is the latest in a series strengthening the legal status of the foetus.

Counsel had argued in the Court of Appeal that no offence could be committed against a child unborn at the time of the act which later caused death because it was not legally recognised as a "person in being".

But yesterday Lord Taylor said that the unborn child was an integral part of the mother. If the Crown could prove that the man, who cannot be named for legal reasons, intended to kill or cause the mother serious bodily injury, that was enough to sustain a homicide charge. Lord Taylor, sitting with Mr Justice Kay and Mrs Justice Steel, were giving their decision in a test appeal brought by Sir Nicholas Lyell, QC, the Attorney-

General, to clarify the law on an issue of public importance. Because of the ethical issues raised, Lord Taylor gave leave for the case to go to the House of Lords for a final ruling. But he emphasised that the judgment had no implications for doctors performing abortions.

At the trial at Leeds in 1993, Mr Justice Holland ruled that there was no offence of murder. He said previous cases involved acts accompanied by specific malice against a foetus and not the "non-fatal injury of a 25-week old foetus without any direct malice".

The case arose after the man stabbed his girlfriend, wounding the foetus. The sta-

ing caused the woman to give birth and the child died four months later. Although the baby's death could not be directly linked with the stabbing, its death was a result of the premature delivery. The man was convicted of the stabbing and jailed for four years.

Simon Hawkesworth, QC,

argued at the appeal that no offence could be committed against a child who, at the time of the act which later caused death, was unborn and therefore not legally recognised as a "person in being".

Yesterday Lord Taylor said that the intent the Crown had to prove was an intent to kill or cause really serious bodily injury to the mother, the foetus being viewed as an integral part of the mother. The fact that the child died solely as a result of the mother's injuries and not as a direct result of its own did not remove liability for murder or manslaughter.

The father is entitled to anonymity under rules governing appeals on points of law by the Attorney-General. The reason is that if there has been an acquittal—and in this case the man was effectively acquitted of any murder or manslaughter charges—then it would be wrong for that acquittal publicly to be questioned.

Medico-legal experts will welcome the ruling as clarifying a grey area of the law. John Keown, lecturer in the law and ethics of medicine at Cambridge, said that "an authoritative pronouncement on the inter-relationship between law and homicide will be of relevance to case of assaults on pregnant women".

Student who beat cancer — with honours

By KATE ALDERSON

A STUDENT given only a week to live in 1992 because of cancer has overcome the illness and earned a first-class honours degree.

Joanne Rafferty, 22, continued her studies from her sickbed during months of gruelling treatment. She had just begun the public administration course at Teesside University when she was diagnosed with pharyngeal cancer, a rare nasal and brain tumour. Doctors told her she might not survive beyond a week and at one stage she was so ill the hospital chaplain blessed her.

Miss Rafferty, then 18, refused to give in and continued her studies while undergoing treatment for a tumour the size of a tennis ball in her brain. The condition was inoperable and she had to undergo radiotherapy five days a week for two months. The cancer had been diagnosed after three years of severe headaches and nose bleeds. She returned to university shortly after her treatment finished and three years later the cancer is in remission.

She was cured for at home in Middlesbrough by staff from Teesside Hospice. Her parents, Frances, 61, and John, 59, were so concerned that Mr Rafferty gave up his job at ICI to care for her.

During the illness Miss Rafferty suffered a stroke triggered by the tumour. The



Joanne Rafferty, who wants to work at the hospice that cared for her

right-hand side of her body was paralysed and she could walk, talk or write properly.

"I had to learn all of these basic things again and the treatment I received has also made me partially sighted, damaging my vision permanently. But I always wanted my degree and suffering terrible headaches in class was never going to stop me," Miss Rafferty said yesterday. "I

was so relieved to get this degree. It gives me something positive to say about the past few years, which have been a great strain on me and particularly my family."

It was the thought of leaving her family and the pain her death would cause them that kept her going. "I told myself to stop feeling sorry for myself and there was always a picture in my mind

of my family weeping at my graveside."

The graduate, who is working as a clerk at a local court, wants to work with the dying at the Teesside Hospice. "It is heartbreaking to see other sick people who are not as fortunate as me to survive," Miss Rafferty said. "Seeing them made me realise working in that environment is what I want."

NEWS IN BRIEF

£19,000 bill for college phone cheat

A man who made telephone calls worth £19,000 to his family in Malaysia after tampering with a payphone's wiring was jailed for two months yesterday. Loke Whong Foo bypassed a card meter at Oxford Brookes University, where he was studying engineering.

Loke, 24, admitted 11 specimen charges of dishonestly obtaining a telephone service. Nigel Daly, his lawyer, told Oxford Crown Court that the student had by chance discovered a live wire poking into his room. Loke has paid back the £19,000 to BT.

Court rage

A man was arrested after driving a car up a pedestrian ramp, through glass doors and into a reception desk at the courts complex in Plymouth. The driver was thought to have been disqualified by magistrates earlier in the day.

Youths shoot seal

Youths shot a seal 30 times with an airgun as it lay stranded in a river. The 12-month-old animal was rescued from a culvert in the River Cleddau, near Haverfordwest, Dyfed, and taken to a wildlife hospital.

Old Master sale

A 17th-century Old Master from Castle Howard is to be sold to help fund upkeep of the North Yorkshire mansion. The *Finding of Moses*, by Orazio Gentileschi, is expected to fetch up to £5 million at Sotheby's on December 6.

Rare visitor

A night heron, rarely seen in Britain, is attracting twichers to Dowseswell reservoir near Cheltenham. The bird, about half the size of the common grey heron, is believed to have flown off course on migration to Africa.

CORRECTION

Mrs May Lappin and Mrs Isobell Prentice, aunts of Charmaine West, were not in Winchester Crown Court when the jury found Rosemary West guilty of Charmaine's murder (report, November 22). We apologise for the error.

Water complaints top half a million

By NIGEL WILLIAMSON, WHITEHALL CORRESPONDENT

THE water industry regulator disclosed yesterday that more than 500,000 people had made formal complaints in the five years since privatisation.

A report by Ofwat showed that 155,800 customers made written complaints last year. In 1990-91, the first year after privatisation, 85,400 customers complained.

The 30 water companies in England and Wales also received more than 15 million queries about bills last year, the highest yet. There have been 67 million queries since 1990.

Anglian Water had the highest level of complaints (15.5 per 1,000 customers), followed by South West (12.2), Thames (7.9) and North West (7.9). Yorkshire Water had the worst supply record, for the third successive year. It was

responsible for more than a quarter of the customers whose supplies were interrupted for more than 12 hours.

The figures are for the year ending in March 1995; this summer's drought is expected to produce a higher number of complaints. The report discloses that 6.4 million people, an eighth of the population, are at risk of water shortages in time of drought, a slight increase on the previous estimate. This summer about 38 per cent of customers had hosepipe or sprinkler bans, compared with 3 per cent in the summer of 1994.

Frank Dobson, the Shadow Environment Secretary, said: "This report shows that, even long before the drought began, the privatised water companies have been failing local people."

Seven deaths in fire an accident

By KATE ALDERSON

SEVEN children died accidentally when they became trapped in their bedrooms after foam-filled furniture caught fire, a coroner ruled yesterday.

The children, aged between 20 months and 12 years, died in Wrexham, Clwyd, in August but Mandy Devrey, 35, the mother of six of the children, and Dennis, 63, her husband and father of the youngest three, managed to escape. The burning furniture gave off toxic smoke.

A three-day inquest in Wrexham was told that the fire probably started when a naked flame was held to a second-hand chair. Charles Rydeard, a forensic scientist, said there was a possibility that it was caused by children playing with matches or a lighter. However, John

Hughes, the coroner for South Clwyd, said that was "the purest conjecture" and there was no evidence to support it.

Mr Hughes said he was concerned about the means of escape from the house and would be writing to Wrexham Maelor Council urging it to speed its programme of replacing windows in 33 similar houses. The inquest had been told earlier that a fire alarm in the house had not been working after its batteries were removed.

Those who died were: Heather Davies, 20 months, Robert and Stephen Davies, twins aged three, Philip Foulkes, seven, Matthew Foulkes, eight, their sister Sarah, 11, and Louise Jones, 12, a friend of the family. The parents have one surviving child, Wayne, 14.

Public backs suspended PC

By KATE ALDERSON

A POLICE officer who may lose his job after being convicted of assault for grabbing a teenager by the ear has been inundated with messages of support from the public and colleagues.

An extra telephone line had to be set up by West Yorkshire Police to cope with calls after PC Nicholas Godber was found guilty on Thursday of assaulting a boy of 15 in Shipley. He was fined £300 by

Bradford magistrates. PC Godber, 37, of Bradford, told the court he had seen a group of teenagers, including the boy, shouting and banging into shop shutters. The group refused to move on and when the boy began swearing, he grabbed him by the ear and asked for his name so he could speak to his parents.

The officer, who has been with the force for 13 years, was suspended after the incident and may lose his job. He had been due for promotion on the

day of the assault, in July. His force is expected to decide his future next week.

Members of the public have offered to pay PC Godber's fine. One woman told of how the officer saved her teenage son from drugs. "His approach was very gentle. He was incredibly helpful and spent almost an hour talking man-to-man with my son."

PC Godber yesterday met officials of the Police Federation, which has promised to support him.

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THE QUAY THISTLE
Poole
01202 666800

Marvellous views across Poole harbour complemented by fine food and a warm festive atmosphere will make this a Christmas to remember in this charming, modern hotel.

Two, three and four night Christmas breaks and one, two and three night New Year breaks are available. Prices start from just £240 per person for a two night Christmas break at The Brighton Thistle, and from £395 for a four night break at The Quay Thistle.

New Year breaks start at £125 per person for a one night break at The Golden Valley and from £205 for a three night break at The Quay Thistle. For full details, prices and availability telephone the hotel of your choice. Please quote reference code BTM2.

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By scratching the numbers you will reveal two letters. Using only the letters revealed on Game D, see if you can match any words on the Scrabble board. Each letter you have revealed can only be used once. If you can match a word on the board, you have won a prize and must make a claim today.

If more than one valid claim is made for a prize, the money will be shared equally among the claimants.

GAME D PRIZE WINNERS

The £5,000 prize (FORESTALLED) was won by Mr R Perks, Camberley, Surrey.

The £800 prize (WAGON) was shared by Mr D Turner of Aspley, Huddersfield; Mr R Ling of Chatham, Kent; Mrs H Smith of East Grinstead, West Sussex; Mrs M Peterson of London, SW17; Mr P Smith of West Wickham, Kent and Mrs A Hutton of Banbury, Cheshire.



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Tower blocks take pride of place on Bottomley's list

By Marcus Binney and John Young

SIXTIES tower blocks, both praised and reviled as the spirit of a new age, are among more than 20 postwar buildings to be listed by Virginia Bottomley, the Heritage Secretary.

The list, selected from more than 1,000 buildings surveyed by English Heritage, includes Centre Point, Millbank Tower and New Zealand House, all in London, besides other buildings built as offices, factories or for the railways.

Millbank Tower on the Thames is widely recognised as the most elegant tower block in the capital and Centre Point, though condemned as the unacceptable face of speculation when it was built, is now a familiar landmark. More controversial will be New Zealand House which, though sleek in itself, sticks out amid the classical frontages of Pall Mall and The Haymarket.

Mrs Bottomley's choice is clearly a personal selection but has been widely welcomed as representative and fair. Her task was made more delicate by the decision to list postwar architecture by building type, rather than simple architectural merit or a shortlist of leading works by leading architects. This laid the Government open to possible opposition from corporations which felt the value of their property would be reduced by listing, or industrialists concerned that factory production might be fossilised.

Owen Luder, president of the Royal Institute of British Architects, one of whose buildings was rejected by Mrs Bottomley, said: "This has to be a good thing. In principle we have to protect buildings of the recent past like those of any other period, otherwise they will go."

Lord Palumbo, a fellow of RIBA and former chairman of the Arts Council, said: "Buildings of real quality in this period are relatively few and far between but it's a healthy exercise and shows the modern aspect of architecture is being considered." Since 1947

21 BUILDINGS COME OF AGE

100 Pall Mall, London; New Zealand House, Haymarket, London; Millbank Tower, London; CIS Building, Peter Street, Manchester; former offices of York, Rosenberg and Mardell, Greyhound Place, London; 41 Albermarle Street, London; Sekers, 170-172 Sloane Street, London; Centre Point, Charing Cross Road, London; Carr & Co, Birmingham.

Head office Pilkington Glassworks, St Helens, Merseyside; Bird's Eye, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey; Heinz headquarters, Hillingdon, west London; 23 St George's Street, Canterbury; cartoon at Röhne-Poulens, Dagenham, east London; John Lewis warehouse, Stevenage, Hertfordshire; Sheldon Bush Shot Tower, Bristol; Harlow Town station, Essex; Oxford Road station, Manchester; Barking station booking hall, east London; Coventry station; Birmingham New Street signal box.

ministers have had a duty to compile lists of buildings of special architectural and historic interest. The decision to list postwar buildings came as a surprise initiative from William Waldegrave while he was a junior Minister at the Environment Department.

The selection made by Mrs Bottomley is important in recognising the strong contribution made by structural engineers to the best and most innovative architecture of the Fifties and Sixties. Mrs Bottomley has also listed at least one building that is claimed to be hard to repair, the adventurous 1960 Oxford Road station in Manchester.

Before the listings were announced the Department of National Heritage carried out extensive consultations with the public and with owners. That led to two recommendations being withdrawn because the buildings had been altered. Dr Martin Cherry of English Heritage said a final selection of 40 buildings was given to the Heritage Department, which chose 21.

"We feel this selection reflects the growing interest, especially among younger people, in the music, art, fashion and culture of the Fifties and Sixties," he said.

John Seifert, 47, son of Richard Seifert, the architect who designed Centre Point, which was completed in 1966, said it "captured the spirit of the times" and added: "I'm sure my father is very proud."

Mr Seifert, who now heads the firm of R. Seifert and Partners started by his father, 85, added: "People were com-

ing out of a period of considerable austerity. It was a symbol of the new world, everything was suddenly bigger, more open. It also reflected changes in the working world. The requirement for modern working conditions, air-conditioning, high-speed lifts, better working spaces. Centre Point has come back into its own again."

Leading article, page 21



Preserved for posterity: Centre Point is among 21 postwar buildings to be listed

Rallying point for protesters

By Joe Joseph

EVER since it poked its slim concrete head above the London skyline in the early Sixties, Centre Point has divided national opinion.

Derided as an eyesore by some, hailed as an icon by others, Richard Seifert's 35-storey office tower has never strayed far from controversy. It was seen as an emblem of the property boom and the triumph of architecture's brutalists, who cared more about paying homage to Le Corbusier than for people.

Built on the site of a 12th-century leper hospital, Centre Point, reminiscent of the Pirelli Building in Milan, was built by Harry Hyams's Oldham Estates. Standing 385ft above the junction of Tottenham Court Road and Oxford Street, only the 580ft Post Office Tower could peer down on Centre Point.

Notoriously, it remained unoccupied for years, and in June 1972 Peter Walker, Secretary of State for the Environment at the time, told Parliament: "I believe the time has come to end this highly undesirable practice." In January 1974, apparently to mark the tenth anniversary of

Centre Point's completion, a hundred demonstrators occupied the honeycomb building.

The belief grew, although it was vehemently denied by Mr Hyams himself, that Centre Point was being kept empty deliberately while property values ballooned, a common practice among developers in the 1960s. Mr Hyams complained publicly that Mr Walker had done him a "very real injustice".

The CBI is the building's most prominent tenant, but over the years others - including Louthro and EMI - have snuffed around before deciding against. Cracks began appearing in the building by 1979, the year the CBI moved in and rented 14 floors. In 1987, a year after the courts rejected Camden council's attempt to make a compulsory purchase of 36 unlet flats in the Centre Point complex, Hyams's Oldham Estates sold the building to MEPC in a £516 million takeover. The building is now fully let except for one floor, which is being redecorated.

In 1990 conservationists made their first attempt to have Centre Point listed.

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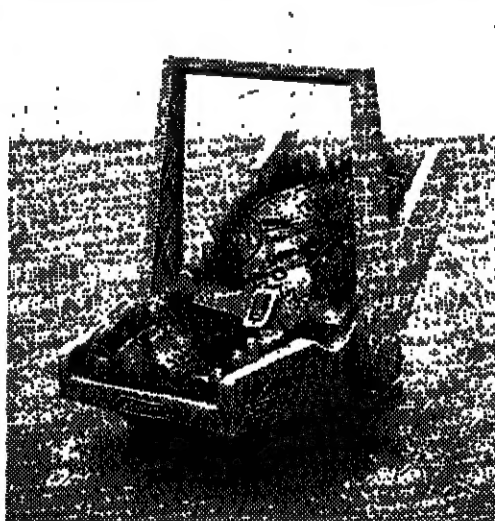
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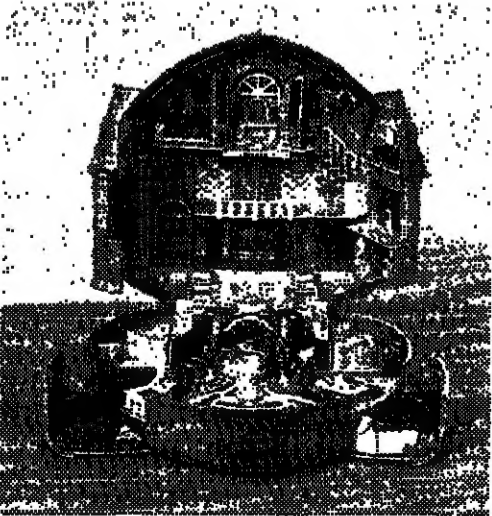
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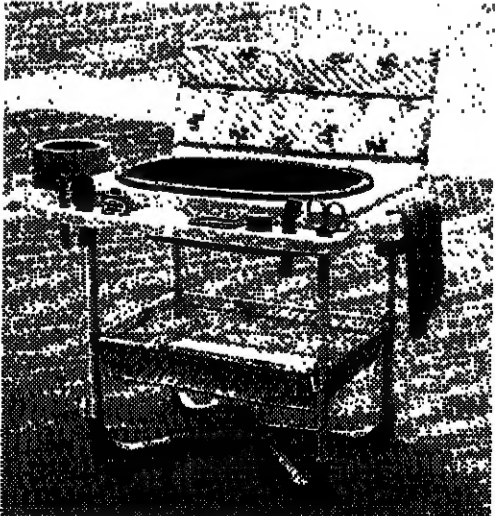
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ITV unveils a British Christmas

ITV has placed the emphasis on British talent in its Christmas schedules, announced yesterday.

In recent years, the BBC has beaten ITV in the Christmas ratings. Marcus Plantin, the network's chief, said yesterday that this year ITV had "turned to what British viewers like best of all - home-grown programmes featuring the very best of British talent".

The station's drama includes a Ruth Rendell mystery, *Heartstones*, with Anthony Andrews; Dennis Waterman as a former SAS man in *Circles of Deceit*; and David Suchet as Hercule Poirot in *Murder on The Links*.

Children's television features British-made animated classics with the voices of leading actors. *The Wind In The Willows* is narrated by Vanessa Redgrave, with Rik Mayall as Toad, Michael Palin as Rat, Alan Bennett as Mole and Michael Gambon as Badger.

On Christmas Day, *Take That* can be seen in concert at Earls Court performing their hits and going backstage for a look at how the show is put together. Robson and Jerome, of *Soldier, Soldier*, have their own musical show.

Costly cars are safest in a crash

By Jonathan Prynn
TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

DRIVERS in a top-of-the-range car such as a Jaguar or Mercedes are up to 90 per cent more likely to escape serious injury in an accident than those in cheaper models, a safety survey has shown.

The Department of Transport looked at 107 models and concluded that, among small cars, only the Renault Clio and the Peugeot 205 come close to matching the safety of executive and luxury saloons.

The safest car on the road is the Mercedes S Class, followed by the Jaguar XJ. Other relatively safe models include all Volvos, the BMW 3 and 5 Series, the Saab 9000, Honda Accord, VW Passat, Peugeot 306, VW Golf, Fiat Tempra and Citroen ZX.

The small car models offering the least protection include the Citroen AX, Fiat Panda, Nissan Micra, Rover Mini, Citroen Visa and Fiat 126. Among larger models the Ford Escort, Nissan Cherry, Peugeot 309, Rover 200 and Skoda Estelle are the most vulnerable in a crash.

Car 95

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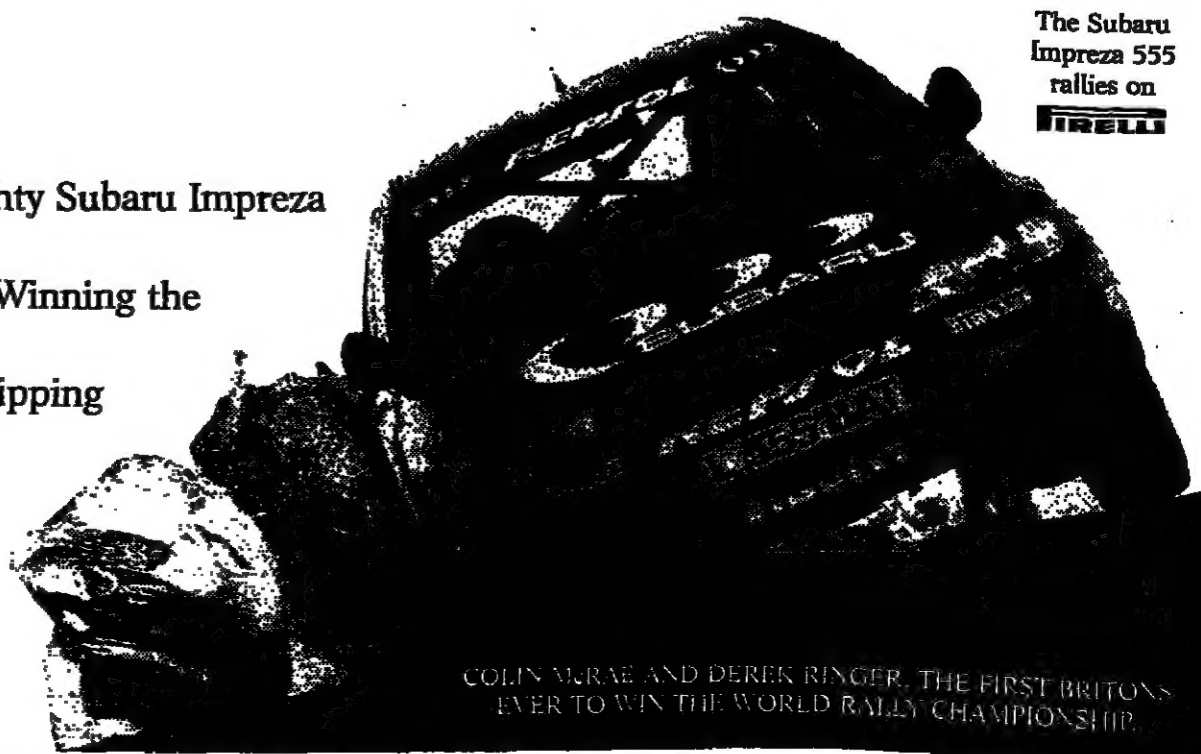


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Backbencher splits Commons Scots reject MP's summertime plan as daylight robbery

BY ALICE THOMSON, POLITICAL REPORTER

SCOTTISH MPs on all sides of the House attacked a Bill to move the clocks back into time with Europe as "daylight robbery" yesterday. They also made it clear that they would not accept a "judicious" proposed amendment that would leave Scotland in a different time zone.

The Private Member's Bill of the backbench Tory John Butterfill to scrap Greenwich Mean Time and impose Central European Summertime threatens to split the Commons along geographical lines. It has widespread support among more than 200 southern MPs and the unofficial backing of several government departments, including the Home Office, the Department of Trade and Industry, the Treasury and the Deputy Prime Minister's office. MPs are likely to be given a free vote.

If the Bill is successful, British clocks would stay on summertime in the winter and move to double summertime in the summer, meaning daylight until 11pm in southern Britain. It would also mean that many Scots would have to wait until 10am in midwinter before seeing daylight.

Mr Butterfill (Bournemouth West) tried to appease the Scottish lobby yesterday by

offering to accept an amendment to allow the Scots to stay on the present system. But the Scottish Office, Scottish farming associations, the Scottish construction industry, the Scottish National Party and Scottish Tory backbenchers said it would cause chaos for business if Britain was run on two different time zones. The Bill would "return Britain to the dark pre-industrial revolution age" and must be stopped. Downing Street was steering clear of the argument yesterday. "There are a range of views on this subject. It is not one, historically, that the Government has taken a formal view on," a spokesman said.

Alex Salmond, the SNP leader, said: "John Butterfill is a would-be time bandit, threatening Scotland with daylight robbery. Just a week after John Major was arguing for sensitivity to Scottish interests, a Tory MP from the deepest South is proposing legislation that would plunge Scotland into darkness."

George Kynoch, Conservative MP for Kincardine and Deeside, said the idea of two time zones was "totally ludicrous and farcical". He added: "We are firmly part of the United Kingdom and I will certainly have nothing to do

with any suggestion that we were other than that."

The issue was debated in Scotland in February by the Royal Scottish Geographical Society. The jury in a mock trial voted 9-3 in favour of keeping the present system after deciding the effects on early risers such as farmers, and the impact on morning road safety, far outweighed the advantages.

In southern Britain campaigners say the reverse is true. Mr Butterfill said: "The police back the measure because it would prevent 660 deaths and serious injuries a year. It would also bring in an extra £1 billion from tourism because when it's dark people don't go out so much."

The Daylight Extra Now campaign has the support of 200 businesses and associations including British Airways, the AA, BT, the British Medical Association, the CBI, the British Tourist Authority, Age Concern and the Police Federation. They have allies on Orkney, to the north of mainland Scotland, where in midwinter it stays dark almost until noon. The islanders want to change and recently voted in favour of using BST in the winter.

Magnus Linklater, page 20

Albert H. Friedlander

Our faith must transcend holy days

Religion must be more than a seasonal enterprise. Judaism, and most religions, isolate certain times of the year when they renew their faith in the sanctuary: we have our High Holy Days and Ramadan, Christmas and Easter all give our neighbours the opportunity to do their religious duty, to "vote" in the sanctuary.

Afterwards, the flame of faith is permitted to burn low, and other matters take precedence. Of course, religious leaders protest at this point, and point out that true religion happens every day, that the sanctuary is open at all times and in every place. And, particularly in Judaism, we reassure ourselves that the home is the central place of our religious tradition, that every Sabbath evening renews Judaism constantly as the family joins together around the Sabbath candles, wine, and the challot (Sabbath loaves) while the children are blessed.

But this does not happen in every home, and Jewish family life is not what it used to be. The synagogues are not

crowded in the "off-season", and the rabbis count the attendance during the festive times with careless optimism to claim that the attendance figures for this year match those of past years.

Is that really the purpose and content of religion? Broadcasters drop programmes with low viewing figures. It can and perhaps should be argued that the few who maintain the faith justify all of the religious enterprise. As long as the

Credo

Eternal Light burns in the sanctuary, the Covenant between Israel and God endures.

Elie Wiesel tells the story of a small synagogue in Eastern Europe during the Holocaust, when each day members of the congregation were taken away to be killed. Nevertheless, each day the cantor would look around, assure himself that a quorum was present and commence worship. At the very end, all alone, he stood in the sanctuary and in his loneliness cried out to God "mir

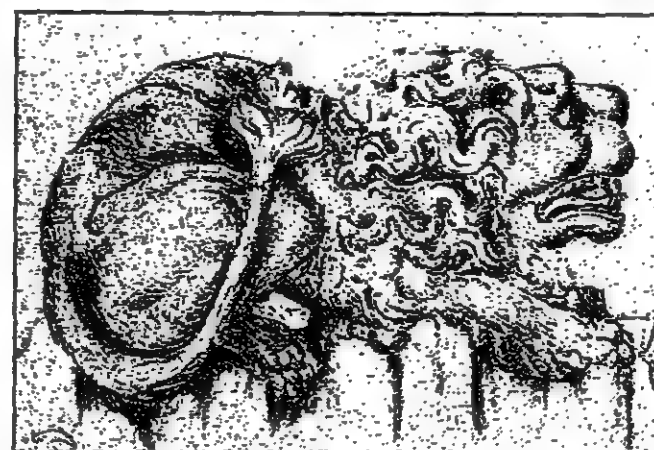
seinen do" (we are still here), and recited the liturgy to God. "God also has to be reminded of the Covenant!"

Judaism sustained its adherents in that darkness. Not everyone was comforted: some kept or found their faith; others lost it. But the light of religious faith burns brightly in the night. Now, in a world of light and tolerance, it is difficult to see a single flame burning. There are other attractions, and the pageantry and customs of religious traditions seem less important.

Is religion still relevant? If one views it simply in terms of entertainment value, the honest answer is "no". But we continue to assert that there are ultimate values which are presented to us within our faith. Ceremony and ritual are there to lead us towards that vision; they are not ends in themselves. The acts of prayer are not to be confined to the sanctuary. Religious leaders reassure themselves that they defend the citadel of faith. After the night of indifference, religion will return triumphantly into a world which will rejoice that the vision was



Caroline Dear, an artist from Southampton, sketches one of the hundreds of ornately carved beasts that cling to Westminster Abbey



A Westminster gargoyle drawn by Caroline Dear

Gargoyles gaze down

More than two decades of restoration at Westminster Abbey has been completed with the placing of 267 stone beasts on the roof buttresses. Twelve craftsmen took three years to sculpt the creatures, which have been viewed at close quarters by 62,000 visitors since a rooftop exhibition of the £25 million restoration opened six months ago. The site is expected to be safe from decay for 200 years.



Teeth bared, the beast rests on a buttress

Poem of loss overwhelms viewers

BY RUTH GLEDHILL
RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

THOUSANDS of viewers have telephoned the BBC for a copy of a poem left "to all my loved ones" by a soldier killed while serving in Northern Ireland. Stephen Cummins, 24, died in an explosion six years ago.

The poem was read on *The Bookworm* on BBC1 and programme researchers and producers have so far dealt with calls from more than 10,000 people. One was from Luke Goss, formerly a singer with the pop group Bros, who wanted the verse for a possible lyric.

I Am Not There, whose authorship is

uncertain, was read out on Remembrance Sunday and again last Sunday by Geoff Cummins, the father of Stephen, one of two soldiers killed when an IRA mine blew up their armoured vehicle in Londonderry. He had sent the poem in a sealed envelope to his parents, asking them to open it if he died.

The poem will be read again on *The Bookworm* tomorrow. The EI made from every sale will go to Children in Need.

Daisy Goodwin, the programme's executive producer, said some believed it to be a Navajo burial prayer. Others attribute it to J.T. Wiggins, an English emigrant to America, or to one of two Americans, Mary E. Fry or Marianne Reinhart.

I Am Not There
Do not stand at my grave and weep
I am not there. I do not sleep.
I am a thousand winds that blow
I am the diamond glints on snow
I am the sunlight on ripened grain
I am the gentle autumn rain
When you awaken in the morning's hush
I am the swift uplifting rush
Of quiet birds in circled flight
I am the soft stars that shine at night
Do not stand at my grave and cry,
I am not there; I did not die.

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Abbey gets into party habit to raise funds

BY A STAFF REPORTER

ENTERPRISING monks are hiring out rooms at their abbey for parties to help to pay for its upkeep.

The Benedictines of Belmont Abbey, near Hereford, have launched an advertising campaign describing it as "a new place for a party". They are offering facilities for events including office parties and weddings complete with disco and a licensed bar, and have appointed a former hotelier as director of hospitality.

The monks already run a successful guesthouse business at the abbey and are hoping to expand into the lucrative conference and exhibition markets. A hunt ball is one of the first social events to be held at the abbey.

Father Mark Jabale, the abbot, said: "We need hundreds of thousands of pounds a year to maintain the abbey church, monastery and grounds and to support our pastoral work. There is a popular misconception that Belmont Abbey is a rich place but that is far from the truth. We have to work for our keep."

A banqueting room is being opened in the former school refectory and the monks are offering special Christmas event packages complete with party hats, crackers and poppers.

At Your Service
Weekend, page 2

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Despots and drug barons sink Cambodia's dream

CAMBODIA'S hard-won political and press freedoms are under threat as the gains of the \$2 billion (£1.3 billion) United Nations peacekeeping operation are swept away by corruption and political ambition.

With the arrest of Prince Sirivudh, the former Foreign Minister and still a leader of the royalist party, the country's fragile civil society is in danger of being smashed again. The most pessimistic interpretation is that one of the two Prime Ministers, Hun Sen, a former leader of the Communist Party, is in effect mounting a piecemeal coup against the royal Government of which he is a part.

He seems intent on destroying all opposition before the next elections, which are to be held before 1998. His royalist partner, Prince Norodom Ranariddh, the First Prime Minister, is doing little or nothing to stop the slide back towards despotism. The promise of a plural society and rule of law, enshrined in the UN peacekeeping operation of 1992-93, are under more serious threat than ever before.

All this is happening in silence. The outside world, which poured money and effort into restoring a semblance of democracy, shows no interest in the country now.

Some Cambodians believe that only King Sihanouk can defend the rule of law. If he fails, then the future is grim: corrupt and ruthless Cambo-

William Shawcross reports on the gradual destruction of the hard-won achievements of a hugely expensive United Nations peacekeeping operation

dian politicians are destroying the legacy of the 1991 Paris peace agreement and one of the most successful of the UN's peacekeeping operations. With the country awash in drug money, the spectre of an Asian Colombia looms. Phnom Penh could be Medellin on the Mekong.

Prince Sirivudh, the half-brother of King Sihanouk and uncle of Prince Ranariddh, for a long time has been a leading light in the royalist party FUNCINPEC, which won most seats in the 1993 election held under UN auspices.



Sihanouk threatening to leave for China

He resigned from the coalition Government last year in protest at the dismissal of Sam Rainsy, the Minister of Finance, who had become increasingly critical of government corruption. Since then both men have been thorns in the Government's side. This month Sam Rainsy launched the Khmer Nation party; the Government declared it illegal.

Last week Prince Sirivudh, an intellectual with a colourful turn of phrase, was accused of threatening to kill Hun Sen. He denies that he had any such intention, but Hun Sen ordered his arrest. Prince Ranariddh, his partner, agreed. He said that this was because he was warned that otherwise Prince Sirivudh would be murdered. That in itself is a dismaying reflection of the state of Cambodian politics.

The Cambodia Daily quoted a source on Thursday as saying that the King was threatening to leave for China because the Government "reminds [him] too much of the Khmer Rouge era". The threat now is different, but also deadly.

In the past two years the

coalition has become increasingly corrupt and arbitrary as the royalists have aped the methods of their Communist partners. A recent cover story in *The Far Eastern Economic Review* said that criminal syndicates protected by senior officers had turned the country into a centre for heroin trafficking, money laundering and organised crime.

The Government's two most prominent critics are still Sam Rainsy and Prince Sirivudh. Each has reason to fear for his safety, in or out of prison.

As a result of the UN administration, a free press and respect for human rights seemed for a time to flourish in Cambodia as never before. Now all that was achieved is under threat. What is depressing is that those Cambodians who, like Prince Sirivudh, have been brave enough to try to defend those achievements are the silence all around.

The world invested huge treasure and effort in Cambodia. Now the descent into brutal traditions hardly attracts a murmur from Western governments.

The lesson of Cambodia is that peacekeeping is a long-term process. Pressure on the Government can still be applied: loans and aid can and should be tied to observance of the rule of law. If that is lost, Cambodia will plunge into another abyss.

William Shawcross is the author of *Sideshow*, an account of the conflict in Cambodia



The egg-shaped domes and snake-like corridors which house the hospital in Kaedi, Mauritania, were among the winners of this year's Aga Khan architecture awards for conservation projects in the Islamic world

Islamic world builds on the past

By MARCUS BINNEY
ARCHITECTURE CORRESPONDENT

THE 1995 Aga Khan awards for architecture highlight the growing scale of impressive, large-scale conservation projects in the Islamic world. Among 12 awards announced in Solo, Indonesia, today are the restoration of the old city at Bukhara, Uzbekistan.

Many of the city's 500 monuments are being restored, using traditional materi-

als, and at the same time are being protected from earthquakes. A second award goes to the conservation of the remarkable mud skyscrapers in Old Sanaa in the Yemen, where streets have been paved, electricity installed and derelict buildings brought back into use.

In Tunis the rescue of the Hafsa quarter, prompted by a local conservation group, also receives an award. Among new buildings included in the list is the hospital in Kaedi, Mauritania.

where a series of egg-shaped domes, connected by snake-like vaulted corridors, house wards, operating theatres and consulting rooms. In Senegal, an award is given to the new cultural centre in Kaolack, with a facade and roof as colourful as strings of African beads.

Also included are the new mosque of the Grand National Assembly in Ankara, and a new bioclimatic office tower in Kuala Lumpur, with a series of inbuilt spiralling terrace gardens.

Seoul leaders face massacre charges

FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS IN SEOUL

THE South Korean President, Kim Young Sam, in a new turn of the national slush fund scandal, ordered his party yesterday to enact a special law to punish two predecessors for a crackdown on a pro-democracy uprising.

Mr Kim was seen as distancing himself from the unpopular military-backed leaders in an attempt to break a political impasse over the scandal that has gripped his Democratic Liberal Party. There are important parliamentary elections in April.

Opposition MPs and activists have often staged violent protests in recent months demanding that Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo, former Presidents, be punished for what is known as the Kwangju massacre.

Mr Chun and Mr Roh, then army generals, headed the junta that ordered elite troops and tanks deployed when tens of thousands of people rose against the junta in the southern city of Kwangju on May 18, 1980. At least 200 people

were killed. "The establishment of the special legislation will be an opportunity to show that truth and law are alive in this land," Mr Kim was quoted by his party as saying. The incident brought "sadness to the people and hurt their pride," he said.

Mr Kim had previously rejected the idea of legal punishment for the former generals, saying they would be judged by history. Mr Chun took power in a military coup in 1979. Earlier this year, government prosecutors said after an investigation that they found evidence of criminal activity but lacked the jurisdiction to charge and try the former Presidents.

The constitutional court was expected to rule next month on the prosecution decision not to indict Mr Chun and Mr Roh amid reports it would be overruled. Mr Chun was President in 1980-88. Mr Roh is in jail, charged with accepting bribes from businessmen in return for awarding lucrative contracts.

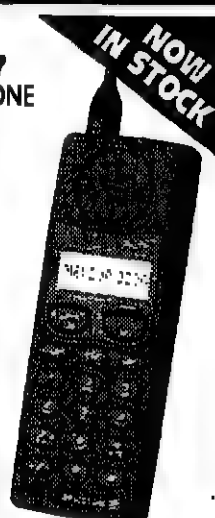
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Scottish Amicable
Life
is CHANGING.

Brecht's daughter wins libel ruling

BY BEN MACINTYRE

BERTOLD BRECHT'S daughter has been awarded damages by a Paris court, which ruled that a biography implying that the German dramatist was an anti-Semitic, pro-Nazi plagiarist had defamed her by suggesting she was the illegitimate daughter of his housemaid.

However, the verdict was only a partial victory for Barbara Brecht-Schall, who had accused John Fugie, an American author, of libelling her late father in his book, *The Life and Lies of Bertold Brecht*. The court ruled that, while Mr Fugie's caustic biography might well be defamatory, only the suggestion that Frau Brecht-Schall was illegitimate had directly damaged his heirs.

Frau Brecht-Schall, 65, had claimed damages of Fr500,000 (£65,000) but was awarded only a tenth of that. Mr Fugie's French publishers, Fayard, were ordered to report the ruling in all future editions.

Frau Brecht-Schall launched her action here because the French privacy laws protect the good name of both the living and the dead, although only — as the court pointed out — when a dead person's heirs are directly affected.



Brecht-Schall: only a partial victory

French cities paralysed by strikes over welfare cuts

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

FRENCH public sector workers staged their second strike in two months yesterday, paralysing transport in many cities and closing schools, hospitals, museums, banks and post offices.

The 24-hour strike in protest at a planned overhaul of the debt-saddled welfare system forced millions to walk or drive to work as railway, underground train and bus services all but evaporated.

The five million public sector employees are particularly enraged by plans to make them work 2½ years longer before retirement, part of a wide-ranging package of welfare spending cuts proposed by Alain Juppé, the Prime Minister, and aimed at reducing France's bloated deficit in time for European monetary union. More than 20,000 people marched through Paris, waving banners, chanting anti-government slogans and calling for M Juppé's resignation.

Nationally, the total number on the streets was estimated at 300,000. The Government, already under pressure from increasing student protests and grim economic forecasts, will face yet another challenge next Tuesday when the Communist-led CGT and the powerful Force Ouvrière unions have called for a general strike by public and private sector workers.

The Paris Metro shut down yesterday. People trying to drive to and from work in the capital found themselves caught in vast traffic jams that in some areas stretched more than 20 miles into the suburbs. Many simply abandoned the struggle and stayed at home. Newspapers and mail were not delivered and litter left by striking dustmen piled up in the streets.

Provincial and suburban

rail networks ran at a fraction of capacity and only 10 per cent of buses operated. Air France cancelled 80 per cent of its European flights after air traffic controllers joined the strike and domestic air traffic was also much reduced.

P&O rerouted its Dover-Calais ferries to Zeebrugge in Belgium, and all ferries to Corsica were cancelled. Just a handful of trains on the Eurostar service between London and Paris were affected, although two trains were delayed by protesters in Paris.

Despite the disruption, government officials said that the response among civil servants to the strike call was smaller than during the last stoppage, on October 10, reflecting divisions within the labour movement over welfare changes.

The opposition Socialist Party, however, applauded "the success of the day of action" and said that "more and more French people oppose government policy because it is socially unjust".

To add to the Government's trials, forecasts due out next week are expected to show that the country's economic slowdown is continuing, with little or no growth in the third quarter. Government figures released yesterday also showed a sharp drop in consumer spending last month.

In another move, Alain Madelin, the former Finance Minister ousted from the Government in August, marked his return to the political fray yesterday with a book attacking what he calls a "new state aristocracy" made up of entrenched bureaucrats and the political elite.

In his 210-page political manifesto, entitled *Quand les autruches relèveront la tête* (When Ostriches raise their Heads), M Madelin, a champion of the free market and a



Thousands of protesting public sector workers march through Bordeaux yesterday as part of French trade unions' response to the government plan to reform the country's debt-laden social security system

vigorous advocate of fiscal reform, pours vitriol on France's political establishment for obstructing vital reforms, most notably public spending cuts and reduction of the deficit.

Since his resignation, M Madelin claims to have re-

ceived tens of thousands of letters of support. The letters "remind me of the lists of complaints sent to the people's representatives on the eve of the Revolution", M Madelin says, with more than a hint of menace. The specific remark that led to M Madelin's re-

moval — that civil servants should work as long as private sector workers to qualify for a full pension — has since become a cornerstone of M Juppé's welfare reforms.

M Madelin has taken pains to emphasise his pivotal role in the election campaign of

President Chirac and to maintain his links within the Government despite his abrupt departure. In a symbolic gesture surely not lost on M Juppé, the former Finance Minister presented the first copy of his book, in person, to the President.

Wives plead for captives in Kashmir

Delhi: The wives and girlfriends of four Western hostages held by Muslim separatists in Kashmir issued a fresh appeal yesterday for their release (Christopher Thomas writes).

"You have controlled the fate of our loved ones since you took them captive 145 days ago," they said. "Please show the strength of your humanity by releasing them now."

Britons Keith Mangan and Paul Wells, Donald Hutchings from America, and Dirk Hasert, a German, were seized while on holiday.

Polish protest

Warsaw: Poland's Supreme Court said that at least 540,000 voters have protested over presidential elections in which Aleksander Kwasniewski, a former Communist, beat Lech Walesa. (Reuters)

Louis Malle dies

Beverly Hills: Louis Malle, the French director of the films *Au Revoir, Les Enfants*, *Pretty Baby*, *Atlantic City* and *My Dinner With André*, has died at home of lymphoma complications. He was 63. (AP)

Radioactive fear

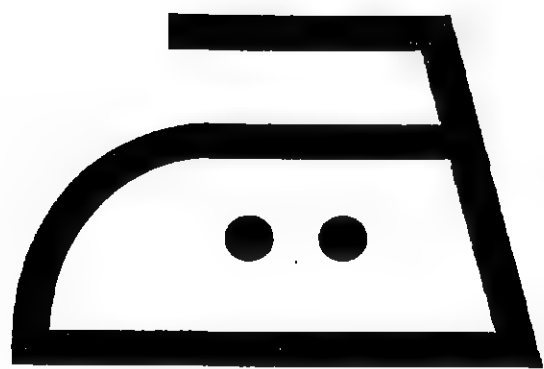
Moscow: A radioactive package found in a park sparked fears of attacks by Chechen guerrillas. The rebels had claimed they had planted packages around the Russian capital. (Reuters)

Sax star dies

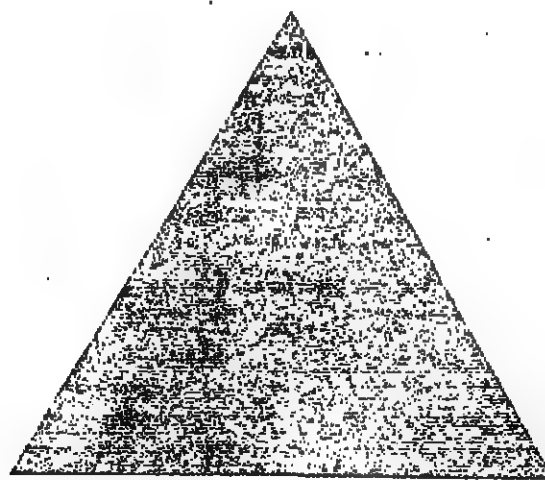
Battle Creek, Michigan: Junior Walker, one of the most acclaimed pop saxophonists, has died of cancer. Walker, 53, had a number of Motown hits with Junior Walker and the All Stars. (AP)

Hotel collapse

The four-storey hotel in the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Nuweiba which collapsed in this week's earthquake was The Barracuda, and not the Hilton, as implied in our news agency report of November 23.



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Bonn threatens 'pitched battle' on Bosnia cash

By IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

HELMUT KOHL yesterday promised his European Union partners "a pitched battle" if they tried to have Germany foot most of the bill for the economic reconstruction of former Yugoslavia.

The German Chancellor said he had been disappointed by European states that promised to help Moscow after the Chernobyl nuclear accident or extend aid to post-Communist Eastern Europe but paid little or nothing while Bonn kept its word. "I see the question of reconstruction aid for former Yugoslavia as an all-European one," he said. "One cannot simply say 'the Germans are responsible for that'. I insist that others recognise their responsibility."

Pledging to make this point at next month's EU summit in Madrid, he said: "We are going to have a pitched battle on this issue. There are so many examples of aid to Eastern Europe where I am not satisfied with what others in Europe do."

The Chancellor said Germany could also go to help Serbs and Bosnian Serbs, two groups branded by Carl-Dieter Spranger, German Economic Co-operation Minister, in September as war criminals who would not get a penny from Bonn.

Herr Kohl, the strongest Western supporter of massive aid to post-Communist Russia, said in 1993 that Germany had reached the limits of what it could pay after providing more than \$49 billion (£31 billion) in aid to Moscow, more than half the West's total. The European Commission is working on plans for a financing package for former Yugoslavia of \$5 billion to \$6 billion over three to four years.

He pointed out that Germany had taken more than 400,000 war refugees from former Yugoslavia, double what the rest of Europe had accepted. His priority after the Dayton accord was to engineer the return to Bosnia and Croatia of the refugees stranded in camps, schools and old barracks in Germany. In Washington, it emerged last night that, on the final day

Sarajevo: Two hundred Bosnian army soldiers rode past checkpoints and looted a United Nations base at Velika Kladusa, northwest Bosnia, early yesterday, firing machineguns over the heads of 80 Bangladeshi guards and stealing nine armoured vehicles, the UN reported. The attackers also took 440 gallons of fuel and parcels of food aid. (Reuters)

of the Bosnian peace talks in Dayton, President Clinton obtained important letters from the three Balkan leaders guaranteeing the safety of all Nato troops which will be sent to enforce the agreement.

The promises, received at Mr Clinton's insistence, should be of considerable help in his campaign to reassure dubious members of Congress and a worried public. There are widespread fears that the 20,000 Americans, one-third of the Nato force, are being sent into a trap where they will suffer heavy casualties and



Kohl: insists on EU's responsibilities

become bogged down in another Vietnam.

The identical letters were signed by Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia, Franjo Tudjman of Croatia and Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The trio affirmed they will implement all aspects of the comprehensive agreement that they initiated on Tuesday.

In a sentence that covered troops from Britain and other Nato countries, they promised to "take all possible measures to ensure the safety and security of all American and other forces and civilian personnel participating in the implementation force".

Yesterday American officials were relying on Mr Milosevic to secure a similar written pledge from the Bosnian Serbs whom he represented at the talks. That would be the next logical step after they grudgingly initialled the agreement under pressure from Mr Milosevic in Belgrade on Thursday after two days of refusing to do so.

The Clinton Administration had issued a warning that no American troops would be deployed until the Bosnian Serbs accepted the accord.

Realistically, Nato planners anticipate that they could run into skirmishes with rogue elements of the Bosnian Serb military who may resort to guerrilla tactics against the peacekeepers. But unlike the lightly armed UN forces, Nato troops will have the brawn and authority to destroy any attackers with tanks, artillery and air raids.

Al Gore, the Vice-President, laid out the case Mr Clinton will make on Monday in his televised appeal for support for sending troops. The mission will be limited and achievable within approximately a year, Mr Gore said, no doubt with his eye on next November 5 when he and Mr Clinton will be seeking re-election to a second term.

Within a year, Mr Gore said, Bosnia's hostile forces will have been separated, borders marked, elections organised, police forces established and a balance of power struck between the Muslim-Croat Federation and the Bosnian Serbs.

Mr Gore told USA Today that helping Bosnia was in America's national interest because by engaging in peacekeeping now, Washington would ensure the avoidance of a wider war that would inevitably draw its troops into combat.



French designer, Agnes B, holds up the "Free Your Mind" award presented to Greenpeace, the environmental group, at the MTV Europe Music Awards ceremony in Paris as, George Michael, the singer, looks on. Some prizewinners criticised President Chirac at the ceremony. Bono, lead singer of the Irish band U2, which received the award for best group, said: "What a night, what a crowd, what a bomb."

Rock prizewinners attack Chirac's atoll tests

joined in the criticism of M Chirac. "As a sign of solidarity to all our friends in Australia and New Zealand, I'd like to say that the only enemy right now is ignorance. So let's all remember, peace, people, let's get rid of this nuclear testing," he said. Greenpeace said it accepted the award "in the name of people of the world who have protested against nuclear testing in France and China". (Reuters)

what a mistake. What are you going to do about it? Tell me you're going to do something about it," he urged the crowd to applause. American singer Jon Bon Jovi

discussed President Chirac at the ceremony. Bono, lead singer of the Irish band U2, which received the award for best group, said: "What a night, what a crowd, what a bomb."

Moscow shows no mercy as grim winter grips army of homeless

AS ICY winds swept across the unforgiving streets of Moscow this month, claiming the first victims of the winter, the city's small army of homeless braced for another bitter struggle to survive.

In a city with little compassion for those unable to fend for themselves, some 120,000 men and women have begun their grim annual ritual to search for food and warmth, knowing that many of them will not live to see the spring. "My friend Viktor, an invalid, died of exposure on Tuesday," said Sasha, a former convict from Ukraine, who spends his day at the Klevsky railway station in Moscow dodging police and begging for enough money to buy vodka.

"They came along and wrapped him up in a plastic sheet and took him away in a van. They do not care whether we live or die — in their eyes we are not humans any more," he said.

This month 72 people have already died of exposure in Moscow and more than 100 were taken to hospital with frostbite after temperatures dropped below zero and the city's handful of homeless shelters ran out of space for the

Many vagrants trying to survive know they will not see the spring, reports Richard Beeston

tens of thousands forced to sleep rough. At Moscow's only state-run shelter, which caters for 24 people, long queues of vagrants form each night, hours before it opens to admit a lucky few. "For those we do help, the conditions here are good. They get a hot meal and a warm bed for the night," said Gennadi Danilin, the shelter's director. "But obviously what we provide is hopelessly inadequate. It is a drop in the ocean."

For other homeless, as the homeless are known in Russian, there are several Western and Russian charitable organisations offering warm clothes, a few beds and some food. But most are left to fend for themselves. Anna Linda, another former convict who has found herself trapped in Moscow without the means to

return to her home in Belorussia, said the key to survival was knowing your way around the city. "In winter you have to know where there are empty basements and apartment stairwells where you can sleep without freezing to death," she said.

Aside from the cold, the greatest threat is from the authorities, who wage an often brutal campaign to drive away the down-and-outs, who are frequently arrested and beaten up by the police. Yuri Luzhkov, Moscow's Mayor, does not hide his desire to clean up the streets, even if it means using Dickensian Soviet-era methods and enraging human rights activists. "In the near future a number of decisions will be made in the interests of 99 per cent of Muscovites which will allow us to stop the flow of tramps and homeless people into our city," he said. It is possible he will resort to mass expulsions to clean up the capital.

"You should not feel sorry for these people they are the scum of society," said a police officer on patrol yesterday. "Most of them are convicts or alcoholics who sold their homes for vodka. They have got what they deserve."

Berlusconi firm 'gave Craxi £4m'

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN ROME

SILVIO BERLUSCONI'S tenuous credibility as leader of the Italian Centre-Right was eroded again yesterday after magistrates accused his Fininvest company of paying a £4 million bribe to Bettino Craxi, the disgraced Socialist former Prime Minister. The allegation has been denied by Signor Berlusconi.

Milan investigators have issued an arrest warrant for Signor Craxi on charges of illegal financing a political party over the alleged payment of £4 million into a Swiss bank account. The account is alleged to have been held by the Socialist, who is in Tunisia and has been convicted in absentia on other corruption charges.

Budapest recalls its envoy

FROM ADAM LEBOR IN BUDAPEST

TENSION between Hungary and Slovakia has risen sharply after Hungary recalled its ambassador to Bratislava for consultations on Slovakia's new language law. At the same time, Laszlo Kovacs, the Hungarian Foreign Minister, said that Budapest would raise the issue of minority language rights with Nato and the European Union, as well as with other international bodies.

The law, passed last week by the Slovak parliament, bans the use of minority languages in such areas as public administration, on street signs and for advertisements. Slovakia is home to 600,000 ethnic Hungarians who, with Budapest, say that the legislation contravenes their human rights.

The dispute comes after a warning from the European Parliament to the Slovak Government this month that it must show better respect for human rights and democracy or else European Union aid may have to be suspended.

Vladimir Meciar, the Slovak Prime Minister, said that the European Parliament's criticism was due to a lack of understanding of Slovakia.

Clinton's funds swell for re-election campaign

By IAN BRODIE

THROUGH all the recent assaults on his political integrity, President Clinton has been quietly amassing funds for his re-election on a scale that caught Washington by surprise yesterday.

So far, he has raised \$26 million (£16.3 million) for his campaign war chest, an unprecedented sum this early in the race. Even better, federal matching funds available after New Year's Day will boost his account to nearly \$40 million. Best of all, he can spend this money during the primary season, because when the election proper starts next August all his campaign funds, and those of his Republican opponent, will be paid by the Government.

Mr Clinton's capacity to vacuum up money shows the enduring power of the White House incumbency, despite the Republican success last year in wresting control of Congress. As his poll ratings edge above 50 per cent, there are plenty of lobbyists and well-to-do Democrats prepared to help him financially to achieve a second term.

For several months, Mr Clinton has been working what Ronald Reagan called "the rubber-chicken circuit" of

political fundraisers around the country. It was at such a function that he told affluent supporters he had raised their taxes too much, one of several gaffes that have created a chill between Mr Clinton and Democrats in Congress.

A full-time fund-raising staff of 34 will soon be disbanded because the coffers are almost full. Terrence McAuliffe, the campaign finance director, told The Washington Post: "It's a beautiful position to be in." At this point four years ago, President Bush had less than \$10 million.

Mr Clinton's riches mean he



Clinton: has worked the "rubber chicken" circuit

will not be distracted by fund-raising during the campaign itself. They should also deter other Democrats from challenging him for the party's presidential nomination in the primaries.

Those running for other offices, however, will be free to solicit funds from donors without trading on Mr Clinton's preserve.

So far, the President has spent \$9 million, nearly a third of it last summer on anti-crime television commercials that most political analysts thought were a waste of money because they were too far in advance of the election.

The Republicans' fund-raising has also proved lucrative, as would be expected. The party traditionally can tap into greater resources and this year has three plausible contenders for its nomination.

The front-runner in the polls, Robert Dole, the Senate majority leader, is also in first place in the money table with more than \$20 million, followed by his fellow senator, Phil Gramm, with just under \$20 million, and Lamar Alexander, the former Education Secretary and Governor of Tennessee, nudging towards \$10 million.

Debtor offers bank shirt off his back

FROM DAVID ADAMS IN MEXICO CITY

JOSE MARIA IMAZ admits he was nervous when he walked into the Serfin bank at a busy shopping centre in Mexico City last week. He had never before taken off his clothes in public.

Standing in only his underpants and holding a protest sign, he filled out a bank deposit slip for "one kilogram of clothes", and handed it to the cashier. "I want to pay my debt, but there is no money," he said as he stuffed his trousers and shirt under the cashier's window.

Like many thousands of Mexicans caught up in the nation's financial crisis, Señor Imaz says he is a victim of skyrocketing interest rates and an incestuous relationship between the Government and the banking system that is stripping the clothes off his back.

Señor Imaz, 31, is a leader of a fast-growing citizens' group, El Barzon, which began two years ago as a rural

movement of once-prosperous farmers. The group takes its name from the leather strap that tied a plough to the oxen's yoke.

As the economic crisis deepened this year, El Barzon officers have sprung up in cities, its ranks swelled by middle-class businessmen fighting the banks over outstanding debts. The group has more than 200,000 members.

In the last year, the peso has plummeted from 3.4 to the dollar, to 7.6, a fall of nearly 50 per cent. Billions of investment dollars flowed out of the country, so the Government raised interest rates. Some money did return, but at a tremendous cost to local consumers. Bank rates rose as high as 80 per cent for annual charges on mortgages, 100 per cent for a personal loan, and 120 per cent for credit cards.

Thousands of businesses have been destroyed and the banks are threatening

to foreclose on thousands more. An opinion poll in the summer revealed that 54 per cent of Mexico City's 20 million residents have some form of debt. An estimated one million Mexicans have lost their jobs and inflation is expected to top 50 per cent for the year.

El Barzon's leaders have demanded a moratorium on all debt. "Someone has to save [the country] from the Government and the banks," Señor Imaz said. "They are looting Mexico."

□ Geneva: Paulina Castañón, the sister-in-law of Carlos Salinas, the former Mexican President, has been arrested in Geneva during an investigation into drug trafficking and money laundering, Swiss authorities said yesterday.

The Mexican Attorney-General said she was held as she tried to withdraw £53 million from a Swiss bank with false documents. (Reuters)

THE SUNDAY TIMES

INSIDE THE MINDS OF MONSTERS



An exclusive insight by the police psychologist who unravelled their secrets

Paul Britton, the renowned forensic psychologist, was called in at the very start of the Cromwell Street investigation. He knows better than anyone the workings of the Wests' warped minds. In a breathtaking report, he describes the thoughts, motivations and fantasies that drove them to the depths of depravity

Only in The Sunday Times

THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

Anti-spy chief Geiger counters tradition of silence with information revolution

Agent for open secrets

HANSJÖRG GEIGER, a tweedy, gangling 53-year-old Bavarian, is very interested in Stephen Lander, the next MIS chief. How will Mr Lander, who succeeds Stella Rimington as Director-General next year, grapple with his organisation's new brief to monitor organised crime?

How do you share information with the police without compromising sources?

These questions are of more than academic interest for Dr Geiger, who is the new head of Germany's Agency for the Protection of the Constitution, one of Europe's largest counter-espionage and counter-terrorist services. The agency is housed in a grim concrete complex outside Cologne; murals, a fish pond and a fountain on the director's floor cannot disguise the fact that the agency played a vital part in the Cold War spy game.

Outside, a rusty statue looks suspiciously like a broken hammer and sickle. MIS, which faces some similar problems over its changing role, has a great deal to learn from the Germans. Dr Geiger is ushering in an era of secret service glasnost. In the post-Cold War period, he

BONN FILE

by ROGER BOYES



country. Dr Geiger says: "The point is to remind people what is in the constitution, and therefore which principles have to be protected." In the early 1970s Dr Geiger, who is a computer expert, helped to computerise the Bavarian civil service and throughout the 1980s he was

a departmental head in the Bavarian Data Protection Agency. Since German unification in 1990, he has been the head of the Berlin-based office analysing and opening up the files of the East German Stasi.

There is no question of throwing open West German files in the same way, but under a 1990 amendment to national law on the secret service, Germans have a right of access to their dossiers. Fewer than 100 people a year make use of this little-known clause. Dr Geiger wants to change that.

Inside the service, Dr Geiger is introducing new, more flexible management. "We want to build up computer nets within the agency," he says. That would allow different departments to solve problems jointly.

Plainly, says Dr Geiger, the way to defend the state against the current threats — right-wing extremism, left-wing terrorism, Islamic and Kurdish radicals, economic espionage — is not to retreat behind the walls of the fortress. "Some traditionalists believe everything must stay secret. If you cut yourself off, lock everything up, nothing can go wrong." The time has arrived for agents to come out of the cold, blinking into the sunlight. They can, however, retain their dark glasses.

argues, "citizens have a right to know what the agency does and the methods it uses". Germans need to know the limits of the powers of the secret service and above all they should be told at what point they become an object of interest for the agency. Dr Geiger wants his secret agents to persuade Germans, particularly easterners who are suspicious of all snoopers, of their democratic credentials. At the same time, he is determined to modernise the service.

The agency hands out T-shirts with its name and logo, and has produced a witty computer game for children, which opens with two swivelling eyes and moves on to questions about neo-Nazis, anarchists and spies. The Cologne headquarters supplies teaching material to schools; mobile exhibitions tour the

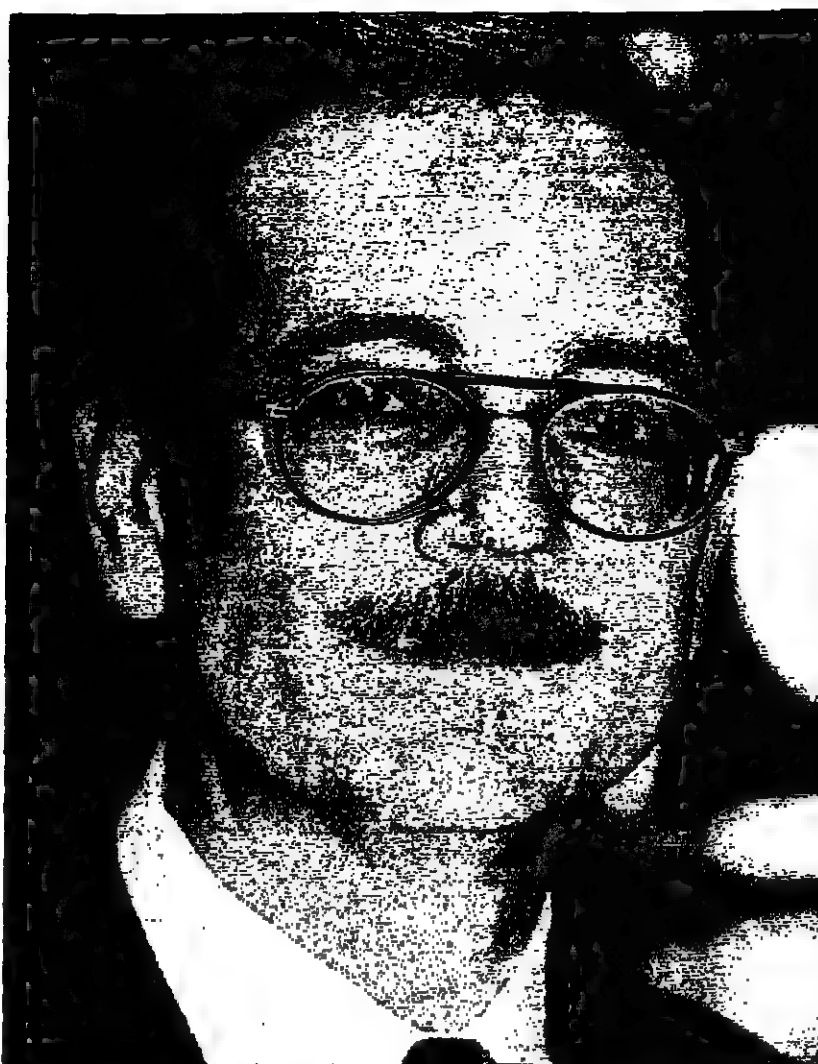
Undercover recruit for 008

BERND SCHMIDBAUER, the top security adviser to Helmut Kohl, the Chancellor, was briefly distracted from his duties last week by a newspaper report that his mistress had had a baby.

In a rare burst of investigative journalism, Bild found a modest birth announcement and traced it to the 53-year-old adviser. The Chancellor is tolerant

of the occasional lapses of his kitchen Cabinet and Dr Schmidbauer, who is nicknamed 008 because of his role as co-ordinator of the spy services, is not likely to be disciplined.

Since Theo Waigel, the Finance Minister, conducted a public love affair with Irene Eppler, the former ski star, it would be hypocritical to punish 008.



Hansjörg Geiger, whose publicity weapons to sell glasnost in German anti-espionage include free T-shirts and a children's computer game

MPs baited by kiss-and-tell hooker lobby

GERMANY'S prostitutes are organising a trade union. They have a dozen self-help centres and are lobbying for legal changes that will allow them to claim social and medical insurance and decent working conditions.

The Greens and the Social Democrats have started to listen and a few political sympathisers are helping to frame a new law which will upgrade the status of prostitution. The draft Bill could be presented to parliament in the coming session, but seems unlikely to pass into law unless there is a sudden change of government.

As a result, delegates at the prostitutes' national congress in Bremen last week-end were thinking about how to put pressure on Bonn. "We have not gone so far as to 'out' a politician," Kerstin Buech, their spokeswoman, said, "but we do know some politicians very personally."

Revealing politicians as regular customers of prostitutes is favoured by some radical activists and should enliven political debate. The key to their success is probably held by Oskar Lafontaine, the new Social Democrat leader. While Mayor of Saarbrücken, he was accused of arranging tax breaks for a friend who owned a brothel.

Tax concessions are exactly what the prostitutes are after. One delegate in Bremen said: "We cannot claim anything — the rent of a brothel, our furniture, work clothing or contraceptives. Yet we all pay our taxes and the state earns very well from us."

Ciller gambles on Europe to ward off fundamentalist threat

By ANNE McELROY



Ciller: depended on the army for survival

TANSU CILLER, Turkey's Prime Minister, is remarkably composed for a person besieged by troubles from all sides. With a fractious coalition to run in Ankara, general elections next month being contested by a confident Muslim fundamentalist Welfare Party, a ragged economy and the European Parliament set to determine her fate by ratifying or rejecting the planned customs union between the EU and Ankara on December 13, she is undergoing the greatest test since she swept to power two years ago.

Mrs Ciller stands or falls by her reputation as a proponent of Turkish integration into Europe, carrying on the secu-

lar legacy of Kemal Ataturk, who forged modern Turkey in 1923. "I have invested my life in this and I will never give up," she said in an interview. But in courting Europe, she also finds herself condemned to repeating the 19th century role of Turkey as a proud and unwilling supplicant for Europe's favour against entrenched traditional and military interests at home.

She has been seeking both John Major and Tony Blair's support for the customs union. Mr Blair may hold the key to her fate: the Socialist members of the European Parliament are inclined to make ratification dependent on further human rights improvements, such as repealing, rather than the current

liberalisation, of harsh anti-terrorism laws which outlaw even moderate Kurdish-language broadcasts and publications. The Socialists may, however, be won over by the argument that undermining

People always say that it must be hard for me to be a politician in a man's world. A woman is good at democratising... like a mother, she is chastising but also loving?

Mrs Ciller would leave Turkey hostage to fundamentalist and anti-Nato influences.

The official Turkish insistence that the Kurds are not a distinct ethnic minority remains a stumbling block to

aligning the country with Western views of human rights. Prone to occasional maladroitness on the matter, Mrs Ciller rather oddly stated that the lack of women leaders in Europe was as deep a

an incursion earlier this year into northern Iraq to wipe out the bases of the extremist Kurdish Workers' Party, the PKK. Its success in derailing the movement was modest, the cost in lives and impoverishment of the Anatolia region high.

"It was not an ethnic problem," Mrs Ciller insisted. "It was a terrorism problem." It is unclear whether this echoing of the army's line is merely a survival strategy or whether she believes it.

Mrs Ciller's customs union campaign is being conducted with her hallmark mixture of charm and steel. Turned out in her signature style of pastel suit and careful make-up and describing her policies in a disconcerting little-girl voice,

Mrs Ciller is unashamed in her use of femininity as a political lever. "A woman politician is good at democratising people," she said. "She is like a mother: chastising, but also loving."

Her family life has suffered under the strains of office. Ozer Ucuacan, her husband and a powerful businessman, left Turkey in high dudgeon last year after the press accused him of involvement in corruption. He has since returned. "People always say that it must be hard for me to be a politician in a man's world," she mused. "But it is much harder for the spouse of a powerful woman. They have to learn to put up with a lot of the pressure that female spouses take for granted."



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صدرا من الامين

OPINION

Will lottery money at last be diverted towards putting the arts back in schools?



THEATRE

A fine revival in Hammersmith for Henry Fielding's savage satire, *A Modern Husband*

THE TIMES ARTS



The Martha Graham Dance Company heads the cast list for Edinburgh's 1996 Festival



Is Woody Allen's play, already an off-Broadway hit, about to head for London?

Rarely have I been so excited twice in one week. On Monday the Princess of Wales tells me that she wants to be queen of my heart. It is quite out of the question, of course. The Editor retains exclusive control of all parts of a *Times* journalist's anatomy, plus first serial rights. Still, it's a lovely idea.

Then on Thursday, on the Tube, I read a headline in this newspaper which is so startling that I let slip a cry of "cripes", causing the lady opposite to fix me with a stern look and then bury her head in the *Daily Express* — an act of desperation if ever I saw one. The headline is "Major plans renaissance for the arts in schools", and the story — based on "Whitehall sources" — suggests that our battered PM is planning to use lottery money to put the arts firmly back into classrooms.

My first reaction is one of almost proprietorial satisfaction. Readers with peculiarly elephantine memories may recall that, back in April, I ended a rant about the spending of lottery money with the question: "Where is the nationwide initiative

to put arts education and performing opportunities back into classrooms?" Little did I imagine that a mere seven months later I would receive an answer. Heavens, at this rate we might even get the British Library finished by the 22nd century.

The power of the press? I wish. The truth is that voices much wiser than mine have also spoken. In May, the Royal Society of Arts published a detailed report which argued that the arts were being squeezed out of children's lives, and that swift action was needed if we were not going to become a nation of gormless, goggle-eyed geeks. Meanwhile, some private patrons of arts education — such figures as Paul Hamlyn and the Sainsburys — let it be known that they would welcome just a little more support from Her Majesty's Government in the small matter of financing the cultural education of the under-18s.

So at last the politicians have crept in on the act. Those "Whitehall sources" are promising a revolution in arts education to match the initiative already launched in sport. And if lottery money can be brought into play — God knows, there is enough sloshing around — the funds could be available for the first and perhaps last time in a generation. This is a now-or-never chance to halt the slide into yobbery that Mr Major professes to detest.

But to mouth good intentions at an unattractable briefing is one thing; to implement a mammoth scheme that will affect every child in Britain is quite another. Between smart ideas and mighty deeds is a vast gulf. On the evidence of the past 16 years I cannot believe that this particular bunch of politicians cares enough about culture to cross the gulf — and the Labour Party displays no



RICHARD MORRISON

great concern for high culture either. All we seem to have at the moment is a lot of hot air, spouted (or should I say Sproated?) purely for cosmetic reasons.

Or is that too cynical? Let us give the politicians the benefit of the doubt and assume that they are serious about their "arts renaissance". What steps must be taken?

First, of course, lottery money must be wrested away from daft building schemes and ludicrous "feasibility studies". The Noble Order of Smoothie Architects, to say nothing of the Most Congenial Lodge of Vested Interests, will have to find another gravy-train to ride. There is no point in building tomorrow's opera houses and art galleries if tomorrow's adults have been educated without hearing a note of live Puccini or seeing a single canvas by Monet.

Then all the civil servants at Education and National Heritage will have to be locked in a big room, along with the numberless platoons of Arts Council apparatchiks, until somebody agrees to shoulder responsibility for the whole matter of taking arts to the young. The buck-passing has been awesome to behold — and the fact that it has sometimes jeopardised the existence of such vital organ-

isations as the National Youth Orchestra is a minor scandal.

It isn't simply a question of throwing money around for "school theatre trips". Those who work on the Hamlyn and other educational projects say that persuading newcomers to enter a theatre or gallery for the first time, or to pick up a musical instrument, is as much a problem of overcoming prejudices as of providing finance. Yet these mental hurdles must be removed, otherwise the middle classes will continue to grab all the goodies, as usual.

Parents and pupils are not the only ones who must be encouraged to give the arts a try. Head teachers must also be reminded that some educational virtues transcend even league tables. The reaction against the touchy-feely progressive teaching of the 1970s has been so extreme that some schools now seem wary

of doing anything that isn't central to the curriculum. Somehow the message has to be conveyed that teachers are not going to be taken into the playground and shot by HM Inspectors if they are discovered organising an improvised drama workshop.

But it is those working in the arts who must change their thinking the most. From prima ballerina to junior stagehand, from avant-garde sheep-dismemberer to concert pianist, the paramount concern now must be missionary work. Everything else is secondary to the business of nurturing tomorrow's artists and tomorrow's audiences.

Can all this be made to happen? The answer is yes if this burst of political will is matched quickly with large amounts of lottery funds, and if ministers push through the complex operation with Napoleonic determination. Will they? Well, what do you think? But perhaps Mr Major will prove us wrong. Perhaps this is his own bid to become a "jack of hearts". It is certainly true that he won a trick or two.

A class act may still save the show

THEATRE: Searing Fielding well truncated; name-dropping with a friend of the famous

Evil ancient and modern

TOP names from the world of music, dance and theatre will help the Edinburgh Festival to celebrate its 50th anniversary next summer. From America will come the Houston Grand Opera, the Martha Graham Dance Company and the San Francisco Ballet, along with Karl Massar and the New York Philharmonic and Christoph von Dohnányi with the Cleveland Orchestra. European visitors will include the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie of Brussels, the Russian National Orchestra and the Oslo Philharmonic. The August 1996 programme also boasts productions by a trio of trendy producers: Robert Wilson, Robert Lepage and Peter Stein.

THESE days, nearly every English play of note makes it to New York. Now comes word that two current off-Broadway hits are heading for the West End in the new year. Sylvia, by A.R. Gurney, tells the story of a Manhattan couple who

take in a stray dog, while *Death Defying Acts* is a triple bill, each act written by a different playwright: Woody Allen, David Mamet and Elaine May, no less.

THE Arts Council has announced that London's proposed Centre for the Performing Arts has been given £99,000 of lottery money for a feasibility study. The scheme would see the Shell Building, behind the Festival Hall, turned into a new university, bringing together Trinity College of Music, the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts, the British Film Institute, the National Film and Television School, the Theatre Museum's massive archive and possibly the London Contemporary Dance School. The study will be completed by the end of January, in time for Shell's decision on the market price for its 330,000 sq ft building. If the scheme goes ahead, it will cost up to £100 million.

Paul Godfrey has shrunk Fielding's play from three hours to two by making cuts in both the subplots and the cast-list. But what remains is strong enough to leave you feeling two things. First, it was not surprising the guardians of 18th-century order found

The Modern Husband
Lyric Studio, W6

Mr Modern (Ben Ellison-Campbell) has been getting a retainer from Lord Richly (Gerrard McArthur) for lending him his wife (Shelley King). But the noble lord, who "sees the rest of mankind as his tenants", is tiring of the lady. Modern, in a panic, asks her to let him catch them in flagrante, so he can sue Richly for "criminal conversation", meaning adultery; but it is too late. The sexual target is now virtuous Mrs Bellamant (Jessica Lloyd). Richly is happy to deceive his friend Bellamant (Richard Cant) and bribe his ex-dress into becoming a pander, as long as he can enjoy and then reject her.

Even today the natural reaction to this and much that follows is, simply, yuck. Considering that the play is nominally a comedy, the scenes between the Moderns are remarkably ugly. Nick Philippou, who directs, may not follow the letter of Fielding when one grapples with the other on the floor in his desperation to grab a banknote from her garter; but he respects Fielding's spirit. Where the early Restoration dramatists were cynical and



Richard Cant (Bellamant) and Shelley King, as the much-used Mrs Modern, in Fielding's *The Modern Husband*, the play that led to stage censorship in England

amoral, Fielding is cynical, moral, even political. "This is a stock-jobbing age" ... "Poverty makes as many cuckolds as thieves" ... "Gold in this world covers as many sins as charity in the next". The ending has its quota of period sentimentality, but the punches that precede it bruise.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

Nice old bluffer

MAX BEERBOHM, re-embodied in old age by a straw-boated Jonathan Cecil at the Jermyn Street Theatre, wakes in his wicker chair and reminisces about himself: half-brother of the actor-manager Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree, a caricaturist, and the theatre critic who replaced Shaw on the *Saturday Review*.

Cecil's theatrical tribute *The Incomparable Max* is no doubt very civilised. Beerbohm blesses us with extracts from his review of Sarah Bernhardt playing Hamlet (apparently risibly) and his fond obituary of the comedian Dan Leno. He also parades a tireless line-up of anecdotes about dinner parties, with Yeats banging on about diabolism to Beardsley, and about his passing acquaintances with Henry James and other droppable names. Once he even saw Degas looking out of a window. Sacré bleu!

Part of this solo show's problem is that it obliges Beerbohm to blow his own trumpet while freely admitting he was no big fish, which leaves one wondering why this life was picked for a play.

Fundamentally, this kind of mock-autobiographical monologue is as theatrically weak as the stage biogs of rock stars that have plagued the West End recently. Writer Roger Frith's structure is bitty. Still, Beerbohm can be droll sending up society's dreadful bores. Cecil struggles mildly with so lengthy a soliloquy, but his Max is elegantly endearing.

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Keeping us all in the dark

Magnus Linklater on why the clocks debate angers the North

We live in a long narrow country. Bits of it, in the far North, have more hours of darkness in the winter than other bits in the South. Whether that is enough to justify dividing it into different time zones is a debatable point. Now, however, that is precisely the point to be debated.

John Butterfill, the Tory MP for Bournemouth, who is proposing that Britain should be put on the same time clock as the rest of Europe, says he would be prepared to accept an amendment allowing Scotland to stay on the present time system if it wants to. While England would go over to the European system, Scotland would continue to put its clocks backwards and forwards in March and October.

This would have the effect of extending daylight hours in the South, where Bournemouth is, but delaying the dawn in the North, where Scotland is. Since Mr Butterfill has come top of the Private Members' ballot in the House of Commons, his Bill will at least go to a second reading.

There, however, it will encounter the full force of Scottish opposition. Whenever the vital issues of time, the seasons, darkness and light have reached the floor of the House, Scottish opinion has traditionally prevailed.

Mr Butterfill's detailed statistics about the potential reduction of accidents, the benefit to big business and tourism, the savings on heating and lighting, may sound convincing, but they are likely to founder on the simple view from the Highland crofter.

To be fair, it is also the view of most people living north of the Firth of Forth: it conjures up a powerful image of country children making their way to school in the dark, of farmers struggling with the early-morning milking, of housewives coping with the washing in a northern penumbra. And it is not just theory. In the 1970s there was a two-year experimental period when time changes were abandoned in Britain and the continental system adopted. Opposition from Scotland grew so strong that the experiment was abandoned: it was accepted that no country could simply ignore the needs of its less populated areas.

Britain is not alone in this. In Sweden, for instance, which is even longer and narrower, the seasonal time-change is widely accepted as the fairest way of dealing with its two extremes. This time around, however, there is an added ingredient.

The idea of introducing a different time system conjures up visions of a country consigned to a permanent twilight zone somewhere on the northern fringes of Britain. Already the sounds of protest are to be heard.

Michael Forsyth, the Scottish Secretary of State, has lost no time in mounting a campaign to scotch Mr Butterfill's Bill. He has engaged the support of the Tory Whips' Office to rally party loyalists against the measure and stall its passage when it comes

before the Commons for its critical second reading stage early in the new year. "I am not persuaded by the arguments for change," he says. "It must be stressed that we are one United Kingdom — we do not want to be divided by different time zones."

Opinion from left and right has begun lining up to support him. It would be disruptive, said Labour — and dangerous, said the Lib Dems. But I was surprised to see the Scottish National Party joining in. Alex Salmond, its leader, said that Mr Butterfill's Bill would "condemn the North of Scotland to a winter dawn until almost 10am". I wonder whether he isn't missing a trick. Should he not be advancing the deeply subversive point of view that Scotland will be happy to adopt a different time-zone from England in the hope that it will accelerate other changes? After all, the Scots have always argued for a greater degree of political autonomy. So far, constitutional reform has been withheld, but why not opt for temporal change in the meantime? Time devolution might prove to be the slippery slope leading on towards separate status, and, who knows, complete independence. If dawn is to rise earlier

in Scotland than in England, Mr Salmond should be arguing, why not a new constitutional dawn as well?

It may be that this is the risk Mr Forsyth sees ahead. He is currently maintaining that any move to give Scotland its own assembly would simply whet the appetite for even greater political reform. Giving it a different time zone would emphasise the difference between the two nations rather than cementing them together. It would also, of course, be a nightmare for industry, for families divided between North and South, and, dare one say, for politicians.

Even now, the business of ringing up continents of Europe has to be preceded by one of those tiresome calculations that depends on the time of year as well as the time of day. Paris is currently one hour ahead of London, so you wait until *l'heure du déjeuner* plus one before dialling that vital contact on whose goodwill you depend. Come March, you forget all that, and try to remember whether it is the other way round or the same way it always was.

Substitute Edinburgh for Paris, and the capacity for irritation, interrupted sleep and missed deadlines is immeasurably increased. For those who find it difficult anyway to work out whether the clocks go backwards or forwards each time, there are here the seeds for potential disaster. A country divided by time becomes a country seriously at odds with itself.

In the interests of sanity, therefore, Mr Butterfill would be well advised to forget the amendment and fight his battle on familiar territory. There, of course, he will have to slug it out with the Scots. Will he be any more successful than his predecessors? Time will tell.

It is likely to founder on the simple view of the Highland crofter

As the Princess of Wales visits Argentina, Jan Morris examines Wales's greatest colony

Princess pays homage to Patagonia

Today the Princess of Wales is due to fulfil one of the more anomalous of her engagements as rowing Ambassador of the Heart. The unfaithful wife of an adulterous heir to the British throne, she will be visiting the Welsh settlements of Argentine Patagonia, started in the 19th century specifically to give Welsh people a God-fearing, Bible-loving New Wales of their own, far from English influence and well away from the British Empire.

No wonder John Humphreys, one of the local mayors, has already declared her to be unwelcome — "our ancestors came all the way to remote Patagonia to defend our identity and language, and for us the Princess represents those who wanted to take these away from us".

Y Wladfa, The Colony, was founded in 1865 on the inspiration of a holy nationalist nonconformist minister, the Rev Michael D. Jones of Bala. Three waves of settlers went there, perhaps 3,000 Welsh people in all, and despite fitful and often quarrelsome beginnings (including the arrival of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, who murdered Mr Jones's own son), the colony survived to be one of the legendary Welsh achievements of history.

Its pioneers, those that stuck it out, opened up totally undeveloped tracts of country, explored new territories, established towns and villages that thrive to this day; and best of all, they managed to do it all while maintain-

ing generally friendly relations with both the indigenous Indians and the Spanish-speaking Argentines. If there can be said to be a totally benevolent example of overseas colonisation, this is it.

Y Wladfa was, of course, resolutely Welsh from the start, and the Argentines allowed it autonomy under their own suzerainty. Its language was Welsh, its loyalties and traditions were Welsh, its laws and its constitution were based on the conviction of absolute equality before a nonconformist God — women had the vote half a century before they got it in Britain. The very idea of hierarchy was abhorred there, and the economic ideal was one of self-reliant co-operativism.

The colony coalesced into two main settlement areas: one an irrigated agricultural valley near the coast, the other a magnificent stretch of ranching country, called by the Welsh *Cwm Hyffryd*, Lovely Valley, in the lee of the Andes to the west. Both had their chapels, their *eisteddfodau*, their

Sunday schools, their Welsh news-sheets; and today both have their graveyards full of Evanses and Williamses, Joneses and Morgans.

Above ground, by the nature of things, the Welshness of *Y Wladfa* has weakened. Its autonomy faded long ago, as the Argentine Government extended its full authority into these southern regions (so conveniently opened up for them), and ethnically it has inevitably been mutated by intermarriage with Spanish Argentines.

The Evanses and the Joneses of today are, of course, all Argentine citizens, and many have Spanish Christian names. Often, only the old people in a family still speak Welsh. Chapel services are frequently in Welsh and in Spanish, and there is no resident Welsh-speaking clergyman. The century-old newspaper *Y Dryfod* is now more like a family newsletter. In another half century, I dare say, the Welshness of Patagonia will be hardly more than a happy memory, a historical curiosity, or a hobby.

But in the meantime, the old loyalties are vigorous indeed, and the links with Wales are enthusiastically maintained — with *Cymru Cymraeg*, that is, Welsh-speaking Wales, which is almost synonymous with nationalist Wales. There are always representatives from Patagonia at the *Eisteddfod Genedlaethol*, the National Eisteddfod. Welsh chapel ministers and language teachers go to Patagonia.

The Red Dragon is everywhere in Trelew, Gaman, Esquel and the other old Welsh settlements. Tourist tea rooms thrive, with good strong tea, *bare brith*, pictures of ancestral Welsh villages, tea-cloth maps of Snowdonia, love-spoons on the walls and pamphlets from the Welsh Tourist Board. Welsh-speakers are easy to find still, and for idle and faltering speakers of the language like me *Y Wladfa* offers the only Welsh discourse anywhere in which we cannot relapse into English — the Patagonian Welsh all speak Spanish. And if *Y Wladfa* is on its way out, it

is going out benignly. There seems to be no resentment, and although the Welsh are now vastly outnumbered, there can be few citizens of purely Welsh blood anyway. The Welsh reputation in Argentina is a happy one — as Bruce Chatwin once wrote, "the Welshmen cheered up all who saw their bright and weatherbeaten faces" — and a visit to the old colony, with its half-Hispanicised Welsh cowboys and its dear old ladies at chapel meetings, is enough to lift any loving Welsh heart.

Whether it will lift the Princess of Wales's heart remains to be seen. Her visit was arranged, I assume, by some well-meaning functionary who assumed the "Wales" in her title to have a more than formal significance. As a scion of English aristocracy, not to mention an appendage of English royalty, she may find it hard to respond to folk-memories of life in the 19th-century Merionydd, or to discuss with much conviction the prospects of a Welsh Assembly in Cardiff.

I will make a prophecy, though. The Patagonian Welsh are among the kindest and most welcoming people in the world, and I bet you anything that by this evening Mr Humphreys, having done his historical duty with that fiery statement, will be eating Welsh cake out of the Princess's hand.

Sleeping with the enemy

Whatever was said in that now famous *Panorama* interview, there were no 'constitutional' implications

Reverberate hills halloo her name and make the babbling gossips of the air cry out. The Princess of Wales loved and lost a soldier. She consoles herself in therapeutic communion with the entire world. The world attends agog. The BBC makes a fortune. On Wednesday I dared offer peace-in-Bosnia as a more important matter for this page. I now admit defeat. Commentators are paid to comment.

There are ceremonies at which we British are superb. We lead the world in royal marriages, VE-Day fly-pasts, openings of Parliament and state banquets. We blow a fine trumpet. We now mean to stage the best ever divorce, a divorce with class, a divorce that will stun the nations and wipe their petty affairs from every front page. Our best journalists, our most articulate politicians, our noblest courtiers, even the majestic BBC is summoned to the call. Britain will take the gold medal for marital savagery. We will be top at pre-emptive malice, unbeatable at revenge. For infidelity in high places we shall lead the world. There is no nook, no cranny of personal misery our media scions will not prise into the public gaze, and gift-wrap and sell for pieces of silver.

For half an hour last Monday the man from *Panorama* leased and feigned his way across the stage before putting the Sex Question. The world tensed. In 1981, every happy couple had "shared the joy of Charles and Di". Now every unhappy couple was on the edge of its seat. Unhappiness is so much more interesting. Charles had thrown himself first on the sword of confession. Would she? Diana lowered her head, flashed her eyes and charged forward. "Yes, and I adored him." Millions gasped their acclamation. Had he been watching, Tolstoy would have burnt Karenina. Flaubert would have wept in his soup and Sam Goldwyn fired a thousand scriptwriters. Hollywood admitted defeat and reached for its cheque book. I smacked my fist in my hand. Name me a nation that could do it better.

Truth to tell, I find the whole thing sickening. Of course other people's generations, and Soames's grandfather kept the family name Sir Winston Spencer-Churchill. "Nicholas Soames's bloodline can be traced back directly to the 3rd Earl's son, Charles," says an expert on such matters. "Diana's line comes through the 3rd Earl's son John."

The Churchill family is none too sound either. Gladstone once remarked: "There never was a Churchill from John of Marlborough that had either morals or principles."

When Soames was first married in 1981 to Catherine Weatherall, the Prince of Wales was best man and Lady Diana Spencer was a guest. After the Soameses divorced in 1990, the Prince of Wales remained loyal to Nicholas, but Diana became best friends with Catherine. "They will have talked about Nicholas and his blunderbuss reaction to *Panorama*," warns one of the Princess's camp.

Going, gong

THE SURPRISE in intelligence circles is not the appointment of the youthful 48-year-old Stephen Lander to lead M15, but the fact that Stella Rimington, the outgoing incumbent, has not received the cus-

tomary gong. One would have expected her to be Dame Stella by now — her predecessor was knighted two years before he retired.

Security sources say she has been overlooked because she fell foul of the Cabinet Secretary, Sir Robin Butler. He was less than pleased, apparently, by her televised Dimbleby Lecture in June 1994 when she disclosed that M15 was spending half its budget fighting Irish terrorism. Just as the Princess of Wales failed to clear her televised role, so too did Mrs Rimington.

Instead there was a thumping great sex scoop. In conveying it, the Princess was induced to cheat on her staff, insult the competence of her husband and surely devastate her children and their teachers. Her professed ambition was to be regarded as a caring mother and "queen of hearts" to the world, a sort of Evita in hotpants. It is hard to see how her confession contributed to that goal. But as the hack in the *hac* says, consequences are not my business, *luv*. I'm just here to tell the story.

What gave the game away was the BBC's desperation to load its scoop with pretentious constitutional implications, presumably to protect it against accusations of salaciousness. The only item of news in the programme was the question and answer on adultery. Yet every department, from *Newsnight* to the *Today* programme, was put on a war footing to boost the show's high seriousness. I lost count of the number of phone calls summoning me to television and radio studios to "discuss the constitutional implications of the Interview". There were, perhaps, psychological implications, and certainly ethical ones. There were no constitutional implications.

Britain is a democracy. The Queen is titular monarch and head of state and remains so despite all the corporation's best endeavours. She will be succeeded in that benighted job by Prince Charles and then Prince William. These three will more than see me out. Whom they choose to sleep with is a matter for them. Democracy can stand the shock.

If members of the Royal Family wish to discuss their sexuality with half the universe, that is their



Washing their dirty linen in public: the Princess and Prince of Wales both aired their problems on TV

decision. If a television company wants them to prattle on about their miserable marriages, there will always be an audience. Oprah Winfrey, Kilroy Silk and Anthony Clare do this sort of thing with skill. But to grace such talk with attendant pundits and "constitutional implication" is like the tabloids prying into bedrooms and gyms on the ground that they are "testing royal security". Sometimes the profession of journalism climbs a Matterhorn of hypocrisy.

The British constitution is based on Parliament. If at some future date, it chooses to alter the terms and conditions of the job of monarch, so be it. That will be the outcome of a democratic process and is not at issue today. We have monarchs enough in line. As for their spouses, at this end of the 20th century we can surely let them choose. If we do not like what we get come the next coronation, too bad. We either lump it or get a different monarch: there is precedent for both. The post-coital, post-*Panorama* constitution is identical to the pre-coital one.

This marriage of incompatibles was always going to end messily. Conducting the endgame in a flurry of publicity may entertain the world, whose appetite for *Schadenfreude* is unbounded. It can only increase the agony of the individuals. Like litigation, publicity is a weapon in the strife and must cause great pain to the children. It is plain that the sooner the Prince and Princess of Wales take advantage of the divorce laws, the sooner they and the Royal Family will be rid of this blight. Both will find new partners and new happiness, and their children can settle into a new rhythm of life.

In this they will be like hundreds of thousands of their fellow citizens. Just as the institution of marriage is essentially experimental, so the institution of divorce is essentially humane. If this dreadful saga serves no other purpose it might relieve other divorcees of some burden of guilt, and make their children feel a little less alone.

It points up the added humanity of Lord Mackay of Clashfern's admirable reform proposals.

ships" in the competition which is being publicised by Melanie Faldo, who split up from her former husband Nick in July 1985. Nick is now separated from his second wife.

● A tenor on the park has encountered arboricultural problems. Staying at the Hyde Park Hotel, José Carreras was considered to be in mortal danger because an ailing tree was about to fall through the window of his suite. The Royal Parks had to co-ordinate with Carreras so as not to disturb his sleep. It took three days to cut down.

Match play

PEACE and marital bliss have at last come to golf. With the gushing slogan "A golfing match that's made in heaven", a Sussex-based golf club is hosting the first National Married Couples Matchplay Championships.

Mannings Heath Golf Club claims to be "marrying the virtues of husband and wife golf partner-

ships" in the competition which is being publicised by Melanie Faldo, who split up from her former husband Nick in July 1985. Nick is now separated from his second wife.

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A PRESIDENT CALLS

Ulster must look beyond Clinton's visit

President Clinton's trip to Northern Ireland next week has been described as the insurance policy of the peace process. In Ulster, the visit has been eagerly anticipated as one of the most significant dividends of the IRA ceasefire, a celebration of the gradual normalisation of life in the Province. Aware of this portentous symbolism and of the role played by Washington in the advancing of nationalist interests, republican hardliners seem to have accepted that a return to bloodshed would be a tactical disaster before Mr Clinton's trip. Now they are reported to be looking beyond next week's political pageantry and considering a return to the gun.

That such a visit should be happening at all is remarkable. Given the scale of the Irish-American vote and American romanticism about the island, the President's visit will do his re-election prospects no harm. But his decision to make such a journey is also a recognition of Anglo-Irish diplomacy and what it has achieved: Without the Downing Street declaration, paramilitary ceasefires and 15 months of peace, this trip and the fanfare which has preceded it would have been unthinkable.

It is unfortunate, therefore, that the trip should coincide with the most serious impasse in Anglo-Irish relations since the declaration in December 1993. Yesterday John Major and John Bruton, the Taoiseach, failed once again to set a date for a summit meeting on Ulster's future — the fourth time they have spoken by telephone this week. The sticking-point remains Mr Major's absolutely justified commitment to so-called "Washington Three", the principle that all-party talks cannot begin before the IRA has made a token act of disarmament "to demonstrate good faith".

The latest threats emerging from republican circles confirm how important this precondition is: the Unionist community cannot be expected to negotiate with a gun at its head. Nor, as the Unionist leader, David Trimble, has made clear, has it any intention

of doing so. Yet the Irish Government believes that Mr Major is being rashly inflexible at a time when imagination is badly needed. Dublin would like further compromises to appease republican sentiment; in particular, it wants "Washington Three" to be reviewed by the proposed international commission for disarmament, thus transforming this key principle from an absolute precondition into a debating point.

Mr Clinton, it seems, will be denied the chance to pull a rabbit — or a dove — out of the hat. Unless Mr Bruton and Mr Major reach agreement before Tuesday, there will be no major announcement to coincide with the walkabouts and the handshaking. The mood is bleak in the Province this weekend. But current frustrations are no excuse for fatalism. The prospects of the peace process should not be confused with the success or failure of a presidential visit.

All parties should look beyond next week. First, the loyalist terrorist groups should begin disarmament. The argument of Sinn Féin-IRA, that it is psychologically impossible for republicans to surrender weapons, would seem politically feeble if their paramilitary opponents had made the leap which the British Government demands. A token public gesture by the Ulster Volunteer Force or the Ulster Defence Association would increase the pressure on the republican movement immensely.

Secondly, Mr Trimble should pursue his proposal for a peace convention, where delegates from all parties could negotiate on the basis of electoral mandate before disarmament had commenced. Although this idea is unlikely to become reality, it illustrates the freshness of Unionist thinking since Mr Trimble became leader. Sinn Féin-IRA is doubtless enjoying its latest round of sabre-rattling. But it should ask itself whether the prospects for peace and a lasting settlement will ever be so bright. If the violence begins anew, it may be a very long time before a President visits Belfast again.

BOTTOMLEY'S BUILDINGS

Why be remembered for a touch of the tower block?

Are you thinking already of Christmas presents? One for Virginia Bottomley, perhaps? Then buy her little plastic replicas of tower blocks — if you can find any. If you cannot, get her that wispish pamphlet by Tom Wolfe, *From Bauhaus to Our House*. An attack on the follies of modern architecture, Wolfe's book is just what the National Heritage Secretary should read — and soon.

It may, alas, be too late already. In a decision that will baffle some and outrage many, Mrs Bottomley announced yesterday that three of London's most brutish buildings — Centre Point, New Zealand House and Millbank Tower — will be listed because of their "special architectural merit". To most Londoners, who have failed to see merit in these buildings for three decades now, the better solution would be to pull them all down. If the Pruitt-Igoe projects could be dynamited in 1972, why not Centre Point in 1996?

There is nothing wrong at all with listing modern buildings; nor is there anything wrong in listing very tall buildings. One has only to visit New York, Chicago or Hong Kong to see how exhilarating skyscrapers can be: the Chrysler Building, for example, is one of the most stately ever conceived in the many ages of architecture, and I.M. Pei's Bank of China tower in Hong Kong is as stylish as it is tall. Cesar Pelli's exultant Canary Wharf building — at One Canada Square — is at least faithful to the skyscraper-idiom invented in Chicago at the end of the last century. But the buildings listed yesterday by Mrs Bottomley have

none of these virtues, not even that of especially imposing height.

Why cannot we be more clear-headed about the preservation of our postwar architecture? Whether a modern building is listed or not should depend on two principles: first, is it a thing of beauty, and an asset to the general townscape? And secondly: is it, technically, an irreplaceable example of an architectural type, school or genre? Buildings mooted for listing need not satisfy both criteria: one, alone, should suffice. But where — as with Centre Point, New Zealand House and Millbank Tower — the structures satisfy neither, the case for their preservation cannot be a serious one.

Ugliness is inherent in each structure: none of the three buildings listed by Mrs Bottomley is in harmony with the surrounding townscape. New Zealand House, for example, introduces an alien vertical accent in Haymarket and Pall Mall — a handsome, predominantly 18th and 19th-century quarter of London. The cuboid clumsiness of the Millbank Tower scars the riverbank profile of the capital. And Centre Point, the least-loved of the three, is so unlovely that it qualifies for a Tom Wolfe label: it looks like "a duplicating-machine replacement-parts wholesale distribution warehouse". Actually, it is worse — it is unusable.

Mrs Bottomley can still change her mind. We would particularly like her to do so. In listing the tower blocks, she has made a hideous mistake. Does she really want them to be known to future generations as Bottomley's Buildings?

KNAVE OF HEARTS

A new boss for 007's oldest enemy

"Sit down, Bond." M. gestured to the chair opposite her across the pink leather desk.

"What a pretty scarf, Ma'am!" Bond said. "Georgina von Etzdorf? That must have made a hole in your salary-check." "Marks & Spencer, actually. You never change, Commander," snapped M. "Still the same old sexist dinosaur of the Sixties. I have something more serious to talk about than name-dropping of designer scarves."

Bond felt his interest aroused for the first time since the Berlin Wall came down and SMERSH came over from the cold in wolf packs. The war had changed, but the cold warriors remained the same, their occupations gone. A bastard quotation slipped into his mind. "Those whom the Gods wish to destroy, they first make bored."

"You have heard that our friends over the river are changing their Director-General?" asked M. "Stephen Lander?" replied Bond. "Worked on secondment with us in counter-intelligence. I helped him out of a provisional honeypot in South Armagh." Bond slipped his hand into the inside pocket of his New & Lingwood blazer, pulled out his gun-metal case from Hermes, and tapped a Morland Special with the three gold rings.

"Not in here, Commander," growled M. "The whole of Ceausescu Towers is a smoke-free zone. If you want to ruin your lungs, you must go to the smoking-room in the basement." Bond took out a packet of Fisherman's Friends, bought only at Culpepper's in Cambridge, and to be sucked not chewed. He stared across the brown

river at M15 in Thames House. "I see what you mean, Ma'am," he said. "This is a wonderful opportunity to get rid of the real enemy. Lander belongs to the Oxford and Cambridge. I have contacts with some of the old and bold there. They would help me to have Lander terminated with extreme prejudice, as Felix Leiter puts it, over the brown Windsor. With no publicity."

"Life is not like that any more, Bond," said M. "I am afraid that these days we have to pretend that we are on the same side as SMERSH, and even M15. Stella Rimington has let the light in on our shadowy world, and taken funding and functions from us as well as Scotland Yard. I want you to go to Brussels to represent us on the Nato committee harmonising procedures on the European intelligence and security services. It may not be quite Istanbul, and there will be less opportunity for gratuitous sex and violence, but I am sure that you will be able to attract your usual cohort of Bond girls."

Bond sighed. That was the trouble with the world today. No more Evil Empire or home firm. No more love-lies with a killer-squeeze of their legs. Nobody took the trouble to do a really sinister interrogation any more. Then his eye caught the queue for the local multiscreen showing *Goldenege*. He allowed himself a wistful smile in the mirror. At least if he had to be a post-modernist 007, his fans still loved him for his dinosaur ways. If he could no longer be king of the Cold War, he had a role as the knave of the people's hearts.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Public roles, responsibilities and due respect for royalty

From Lieutenant-Commander
Adrian Stewart, RN (ret)

Sir, So "senior Conservatives" — not a group one instantly associates with sound marriage guidance — envisage that Prince Charles will divorce (report, November 22; also letters 22, 23 and 24). I hope someone with more authority than I will make the opposite proposal — reconciliation and forgiveness, each way.

Yours faithfully,
ADRIAN STEWART,
The Annet, Oswaldkirk, York,
November 22.

From Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain

Sir, Yes, there is a special role that, amongst others, the Princess of Wales can play. Her marital problems are not unique but reflect those of thousands of couples throughout the country. Separation and divorce may be regrettable, but are a prominent feature of British life and likely to stay so.

She, and her husband, could provide models of how to disengage maturely and sensitively. At a time when most divorces are acrimonious and confrontational, they could try to show how to part amicably, maintain good relations with an extended family and make the children's interests paramount.

In this way, even at this late stage, she could help turn a desperately sad personal situation into an important national example.

Yours faithfully,
JONATHAN ROMAIN,
9 Boyne Hill Avenue,
Maidenhead, Berkshire,
November 23.

From Miss Virginia Douglas

Sir, For me, the Princess of Wales's plea for "a role" has echoes of the late Duke of Windsor pleading after abdication for a job.

By that the Duke did not, in my view, mean a post where he could make a worthwhile contribution away from the public eye: he wanted the limelight, the adulation and the whole lifestyle pertaining to a prince but without any of the sacrifices of personal freedom and fulfilment which went with it. Other members of the Royal Family made these sacrifices, and in doing so earned our respect.

Yours faithfully,
V. S. DOUGLAS,
73 Ormeau Road, SW12,
November 21.

From Mrs Sandra Phillips

Sir, Mrs D. M. Dudley (letter, November 20) asks if the BBC has any consideration for the Queen's personal feelings. Did Prince Charles consider the personal feelings of his wife, children, parents and family when he gave his interview last year?

Yours faithfully,
SANDRA PHILLIPS,
Ty Gwyn, Treos,
Nr Bridgend, South Glamorgan,
November 20.

From Mrs Ann Herold

Sir, John Grigg's remark in his article on the monarchy "Whatever offence

she has given ..." (November 22), made me choke on my tea and toast.

What offence? She was an innocent young girl who was used by a man and his family for the most cynical of motives. Is it surprising she feels hurt, paranoid even?

Yours sincerely,
ANN HEROLD,
24 The Red House,
Park Lane, Salisbury, Wiltshire,
November 22.

From Mr Jonathan M. Lewis

Sir, The Princess of Wales's interview has initiated a nationwide debate about the allocation of responsibility for the position in which she finds herself. Is there any single member of the press or the media who is prepared to accept a scintilla of this responsibility or — better still — now to lay down his pen or his lens?

Yours faithfully,
JONATHAN LEWIS,
5 Shelbourne Close,
Pinner, Middlesex,
November 22.

From Mrs Brenda Maitland

Sir, What an indictment of the press the Princess's interview was. No marriage could survive the cruelty of the persecution by the media that she and her husband faced and tried to cope with. Those who criticise the Prince and Princess would do well to consider first what their own reactions would have been in those circumstances.

Yours faithfully,
BRENDA MAITLAND,
Heron's Lake,
Milland, Liphook, Hampshire,
November 23.

From Mrs Elizabeth Hilton

Sir, I feel that Princess Diana has set women back decades.

I am a teacher. I am in education because I believe that women have a role in the workplace. I work hard under a great deal of stress with family responsibilities and I cope.

What women need is a role model that is an intelligent, busy, working woman who does not collapse under the strain. What I saw on television

Press and privacy

From Lord Wakeham, Chairman of
the Press Complaints Commission

Sir, To make the position absolutely clear to Sir Louis Blom-Cooper (letters, November 20 and 23), my article in *The Mail on Sunday* set out a principle which we all know to be true: privacy is a right to which we are all entitled but which our own actions can compromise. The article did not draw inferences from that or apply it to any particular individual. Our freedom to adjudicate any complaint on an issue touched on in that article is therefore not affected.

In taking the Press Complaints Commission forward over the last 11 months, I have recognised that its effectiveness will only be increased if the industry it presides over is from time to time reminded about its own Code

of Practice and the implications of the decisions which the PCC builds up by the application of the code in complaints adjudications. My article did that and reminded all members of the public that while the press has its responsibilities, it has its duties as well.

The main criticism of Sir Louis's Press Council as noted by the Calcutt committee was that it was "ineffective as an adjudicating body". It is in part because we have learnt from these experiences that the PCC now commands the widespread support of the press as a mature and responsible custodian of the industry's own Code of Practice and is increasingly being recognised as an effective complaints-handling body.

Yours faithfully,
WAKEHAM, Chairman,
Press Complaints Commission,
1 Salisbury Square, EC4,
November 23.

From the Editor of
The Inverness Courier

Sir, Matthew Parris (Political Sketch, November 22) singles out *The Inverness Courier* for not covering the Princess of Wales's interview, saying it "must answer for itself".

The *Courier* is a local bi-weekly, publishing on Tuesdays and Fridays, and contract printing arrangements demand that we go to press at 1.30pm on a Monday for our Tuesday edition. Since *Panorama* was not screened until 9.40pm on Monday and no advance transcript of the interview was available, there was little the *Courier* could do other than fulfil its normal function — cover the news relating to Inverness and district.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN MACDONALD,
Editor,
The Inverness Courier,
12-14 Seafield Road, Inverness,
November 22.

From Mr Michael Donley

Sir, Why not a republic — with Diana as president, of course?

Yours hopefully,
MICHAEL DONLEY,
72d Woodstock Road,
Witney, Oxfordshire,
November 22.

Quality of the clergy

From the Reverend P. N. Jeffery

Sir, To blame the clergyman when congregation numbers drop (report, later editions, November 16) is as unfair as to blame the doctor when people die. Most priests struggle faithfully to present the claims of God to their parishioners and to bring the needs in their parish to God. Morale is not helped by unsympathetic leadership.

Dr Carey's thoughtless utterances are just another burden the clergy now have to carry.

Yours faithfully,
PETER N. JEFFERY,
The Rectory, Turvey, Bedfordshire,
November 16.

From the Reverend Canon
M. W. Dittmer

Sir, Bishop Holloway, head of the Anglican Church in Scotland, is reported (November 16) as saying that biblical morality is out of date.

In about five weeks time we will be celebrating the birth of Jesus, the coming into the world of God's Word.

Alcohol and the young

From Dr John Rae

Sir, The report by the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Paediatricians, *Alcohol and the Young* (details, November 22), is an important contribution to a debate that is too often confused because we are not clear what it is we are trying to prevent.

The legal drinking age is five. The legal buying age is 18. What do we want to happen between those two ages? The report fails to address this question, yet it says that the average alcohol consumption for 13-year-old boys is four pints of beer or the equivalent a week. Surely that is precisely what we should be trying to prevent. Regular alcohol consumption should not be part of the lifestyle of 13-year-olds.

The report recommends raising the price. But why should everybody pay more when the problem is caused not by cheapness but by adult irresponsibility? Where do the 13-year-olds get

Mr Collins and the Bennet entail

From Mr Philip Rosedale

Sir, Baroness James (letter, November 18) is puzzled by why, in *Pride and Prejudice*, Mr Collins, heir presumptive to the Longbourn entail, is not named Bennet.

At the time that Jane Austen was writing *Pride and Prejudice* entails were far more frequent than they are today. They took two forms: a tail male and a tail general. Property held in tail male descended to and through males.

Longbourn was settled in tail male, and so the daughters of Mr and Mrs Bennet could not take it on the death of their father. The next to take, being a paternal relative, should have had the same surname: yet the next to take was called Collins.

The inference is that a previous settlor had entailed Longbourn in tail male, with a requirement that each holder should take and use the surname Bennet. Such a provision was established as valid in a tail male before *Pride and Prejudice* was written, and is still in use.

Mr Collins would take the property in due course — with the surname that went with it. That is one of the reasons Mrs Bennet is so upset: when Charlotte, née Lucas now Collins, does come to live at Longbourn, she will be called "Mrs Bennet"; and so "if it was not for the entail, I should not mind it".

To emphasise the point, Jane Austen shows that Rosings was settled in tail general, and could therefore descend on a female. Mr Collins says that Lady Catherine de Bourgh's daughter was the heiress of Rosings.

Jane Austen does not use the word heiress elsewhere: it is the technical term for a female entitled to entailed property on the death of a holder not leaving a male heir. Lady Catherine says she saw "no occasion for entailing estates away from the female line. It was not thought necessary in Sir Lewis de Bourgh's family".

Yours faithfully,
PHILIP ROSDALE,
10 Old Square, Lincoln's Inn, WC2,
November 21.

From Mr Martin de Bertodano

Sir, I suggest that Miss Austen, while correct in the substance of what she wrote, did not properly differentiate between an entail and a settlement.

She was by no means the last person to use those terms indifferently: a strict settlement was — and is — unbreakable within its perpetuity period, which was traditionally the lifetime of heirs who had already been born before the date of the settlement.

The question was discussed in your correspondence columns of April 2, 1929, where it was suggested by the eminent property lawyer, G. R. Y. Radcliffe, that Mr Bennet must have been tenant for his own life only, with remainder to his first and other sons successively in tail male, followed by similar limitations in the Collins family.

This seems to follow on the assumption that Miss Austen (at the beginning of chapter 7) intended to suggest that Mr Collins was a tenant in tail male in remainder in default of heirs male of the body of Mr Bennet.

Mr Radcliffe compared the situation which Miss Austen must have envisaged with the special remainder under which the Nelson earldom passed in real life from the heirs male of the body of the gloriously deceased admiral's brother as first earl to the heirs male of the body of his sister Mrs Bolton, and in preference to the first earl's daughters.

Yours faithfully,
MARTIN DE BERTODANO,
Pooley Dale & Co,
Bristol & West House,
10-15 Regent Circus,
Swindon, Wiltshire,
November 18.

From Mrs Ruth E. Seed

Sir, I see no problem in Mr Bennet's reference to Mr Collins as "cousin", even if he was quite a distant relative. In earlier days the term "cousin" was used to denote almost any blood relation, as we see in Shakespeare.

As a child, some sixty years ago, I was taught to address and refer to my parents' cousins as "Cousin Emily", "Cousin Nellie", etc, and I imagine many people, especially those with large and complicated families, would still use the term in conversation to cover second, third or even more distant cousins, for the sake of simplicity.

Yours faithfully,
R. E. SEED,
5 Empress Avenue,
Pulwood, Preston, Lancashire.

From Mrs Felicity Luke

Sir, Jane Austen's contemporaries may have raised the same point as does P. D. James, for in her later novel, *Persuasion*, the heir to Sir Walter Elliot's estate is his distant cousin, to whom she gives the same surname.

Yours faithfully,
FELICITY LUKE,
18 Regent's Park Road, NW1,
November 18.

From Mr David Nathan

Sir, Come to that, why didn't Hamlet inherit Denmark?

Yours faithfully,
DAVID NATHAN,
16 Augustus Close, Brentford Dock,
Brentford, Middlesex,
November 20.

Weekend Money letters, page 39

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782-5046.

OBITUARIES

LORD O'BRIEN OF LOTHBURY

Lord O'Brien of Lothbury, PC, GBE, Governor of the Bank of England, 1966-73, died yesterday aged 87. He was born on February 8, 1908.

AS ITS first Governor to have made his whole career with the Bank of England, Leslie O'Brien was an appointment very much in the spirit of the meritocratic methods with which Harold Wilson wished to replace the more traditional assumptions about the filling of such important posts. He had begun at the Bank as a clerk direct from school at the age of 19 and replaced a patrician City figure, the 3rd Earl of Cromer, at the helm. All previous governors had come to the Bank from City institutions either direct to the Governorship or to senior positions in the Bank in mid-career. Partly because he was a complete Bank of England professional, O'Brien was acceptable to all the political parties, whereas Wilson's relations with Cromer had never been easy, since the latter's views on the harsh realities of market behaviour did not square with the Prime Minister's desire for a large programme of public spending. O'Brien was reappointed for a second term when Edward Heath's Conservative Government came to power in 1970.

But on his appointment as Governor he soon belied any expectation that, because of his career background, he might be more subservient to the Government than some of his predecessors. An early speech in which he said that a measure of deflation, with some unemployment, would be needed to protect the pound, antagonised the Labour Left so much that some called for his resignation. However, O'Brien criticised Labour and Conservative Governments' policies equally, and his favourite theme was the excessive demands that soaring public expenditure was making on the economy. At the same time, he was unwaveringly loyal in carrying out the policies which were decided by the Government. And there were many important policy decisions which involved the Bank deeply: devaluation in 1967; borrowings from the International Monetary Fund and their use to support the pound; the introduction by Edward Heath's Government of monetary control through interest rates; and finally the floating of the pound in 1972.

O'Brien also pursued many initiatives of his own, being more active than most Governors in planning and negotiating special arrangements of various kinds with City institutions, overseas central banks and others. He earned a high reputation outside the Bank for his ability and diplomacy and it was soon recognised that his quiet and courteous manner concealed a strong will. Inside the Bank he commanded a special devotion from the staff, who felt that he was one of their own. This enabled him to reorganise the Bank in some respects smoothly and without friction.



Leslie Kenneth O'Brien was educated at Wandsworth School. He joined the Bank in 1927 and ascended the promotion ladder steadily and rapidly. He spent a period as secretary to the Governor. His first post with senior responsibility was in the overseas department, where he began to make the acquaintance of overseas central banks and their staff. During and after the war he became involved in the intricacies of foreign exchange control.

After a while he returned to the home side, and in 1951 was appointed to the important post of Deputy Chief Cashier. It was at that time the most important in that bank rate had just been increased from 2 to 2.5 per cent and the Bank had let it be known that, after a lapse of 20 years, bank rate was now to be used as a variable monetary regulator. O'Brien had to assist the Chief Cashier, Sir Kenneth

Peppiatt, in helping the money market to relearn the techniques required for a system which had fallen into desuetude.

Three years later he succeeded Peppiatt as Chief Cashier, thereby achieving the strange notoriety which every Chief Cashier achieves for his signature in that he signs the mystic words "I promise to pay the Bearer on Demand the Sum of..." which appear on currency notes. His eight-year term as Chief Cashier was an important one, since the money market was becoming more and more an active force in the financial control of the economy instead of the passive formality that it had been for many years.

Then his ascent to the top quickened. He was made an executive director in 1962 and Deputy Governor in 1964. He might have stopped short at the level of Deputy Governor, as several who had served the Bank all their lives had stopped short before him. But circumstances came to his aid. In 1966 the Labour Government was looking for a successor to Lord Cromer, who had been a particularly independent and outspoken Governor and came from the traditional merchant-banking background (he was a Baring). Harold Wilson and his colleagues wanted someone whom they thought would be more reticent and docile, and in this they were supported by the Treasury civil servants. It seemed that O'Brien would fill the bill, and

since his ability was unquestioned, his appointment could hardly be open to criticism.

As it turned out, O'Brien displayed the ability but none of the docility or reticence that were expected of him. After the forced devaluation of the pound in 1967, he ridiculed attempts to blame the devaluation on "speculators", which was what many Labour politicians tried to do. He infuriated the Labour Left still further by saying that "unemployment is an essential part of the economy until the nation's affairs are straightened out". However, he was bipartisan in his criticisms. He advocated an incomes policy when the Tory Government was still dead against it, and said about Conservative policy that there should be more modest targets for growth, that public spending should be cut and that there was excessive deficit financing of the public sector.

Government policy involved O'Brien and the Bank in arduous tasks of exchange and monetary management. O'Brien himself had some reservations about the Conservative Government's "Competition and Credit Control", designed to increase interest-rate control and reduce administrative control of the monetary system. It required new techniques and was not a complete success, but the difficulties were due to deficit financing by the Government rather than any fault in the Bank's management.

O'Brien seems to have concurred in the Government's decision to float the pound in June 1972 and it duly started off its no-fixed-rate career at about \$2.45. But, though the Bank was usually able to prevent violent fluctuations, it could not prevent successive falls in the pound's value. O'Brien was more positively associated with the international credit in 1968 to guarantee the exchange value of overseas governments' sterling balances. But this was not a success. It proved expensive and did not prevent the governments from running down their balances in the end: in fact the importance of the Sterling Area declined steadily throughout his governorship.

At the same time O'Brien took a major part in securing the establishment of a body — the Takeover Panel — designed to improve the procedures and ethical standards of take-over bids. He had to organise a rescue operation to deal with the widespread difficulties which arose in the secondary banking system

after the collapse of the property boom in 1974. He tried — but in this case unsuccessfully — to persuade the big institutional investors to form a special standing committee to supervise the affairs of ailing companies and impose new management on them.

He also took a careful look at the organisation of the Bank of England itself, inviting an outside investigation of its administration, as a result of which some changes were made. He also anticipated the Select Committee on the Nationalised Industries and the Bank of England by publishing the Bank's accounts in a new, comprehensive and comprehensible form.

O'Brien continued his criticisms of government expenditure and deficit financing during his term as Governor. He may have felt that he had not fought as hard as he should on public financial policy, for on the verge of a premature retirement he said that he did not want "to evade my share of the blame for the unsuccessful management which has bedevilled this country for far too long". His retirement at the age of 65 in February 1973, three years before the expiry of his term, indicated that his views were becoming increasingly at variance with those gaining support within the Government.

At that time he was made a life peer (he had been appointed GBE in 1967) and was made a Privy Counsellor in 1970. After this retirement he accepted requests from several organisations for his services. On the big business side, he joined the boards of Prudential Assurance, Unilever and the Bank Organisation and also became a member of a special advisory council set up by Morgan Grenfell. He was also a director of the National Theatre and was treasurer and a member of the executive committee of the Royal Opera House Development Appeal.

In private life he was a social and unpretentious person, enjoying home life and the company of his many friends. At home he was, indeed, something of a do-it-yourself man, being an expert carpenter. He was also a keen tennis player and was deeply interested in music and the theatre.

He married, in 1932, Isabelle Gertrude Pickett and they had one son. She died in 1987 and he married, in 1989, Marjorie Violet Taylor. She and the son of his first marriage survive him.

EDNA DEANE



Edna Deane and her partner Timothy Palmer, with whom she won British and world ballroom titles

Edna Deane, former British and world professional ballroom dancing champion, died on November 22 aged 90. She was born on October 15, 1905.

IN THE immaculately dressed world of pre-war ballroom dancing Edna Deane reigned supreme as one of the greatest champions of the century. Her grace and poise on the dancefloor brought her not only the British but also the world ballroom crown, while her blonde beauty and distinctive charm earned her the admiration of the then Prince of Wales, later the Duke of Windsor, and also that of Fred Astaire, who described her memorably as "authentic poetry in motion".

Born Edna Morton Sewell at Witsies Hoek in the Orange Free State, she was the eldest of the three daughters of English parents. Percival George Sewell, later the accountant for Harrods, and his wife, Anne St Leger Bradley, a professional pianist (as Dorothy Deane, she played for Beatrice Lillie and other leading stars).

The Sewells returned to Britain when Edna was two and, as a child, she studied classical ballet with Dame Marie Rambert, Greek dancing with Olive Ripman, and ballroom dancing with Josephine Bradley. She made her professional debut at the age of 12 at the Piccadilly, Berkeley and Hyde Park hotels in a dancing trio, called the Sunshine Babies, with her younger sisters Dorothy and Eileen.

By the mid-1920s Edna Deane was one of London's leading dancers and as celebrated a figure as any film or stage star. Her beauty had caught the eye of the Prince of Wales who asked her to partner him nine times, in one evening at the Ascot Cabaret Ball, an event said to have inspired the popular song, *I danced with a man who danced with the Prince of Wales*.

In 1929 Edna Deane became the British fox-trot champion. At the London Palladium, where she starred with Flanagan and Allen, she was billed as "The Queen of Dance".

Fred Astaire, watching her perform there, considered her the outstanding British female dancer.

The year 1933 was Deane's *annus mirabilis*. In the space of 12 months she and her

partner, Timothy Palmer, won both the British and the world professional ballroom dancing championships. In January 1935, however, she married the London barrister, James Trevor Kendal, and went into semi-retirement. "The lights of London have dimmed," lamented Lord Castlereagh of the *Sunday Express*. "The divine Edna is lost to us."

But Deane, though no longer a competitor, remained a leading figure in the dancing world. Her ballet poem, *Boutique Fantastique*, was broadcast on BBC Radio, and in 1947, Collins published her book *Ballet To Remember*. By that time, she was deeply involved in the Deane School of Dance and Drama, founded by her mother, herself and her two sisters. Many leading stars were among their pupils, including Barbara Murray and Hattie Jacques.

After the Deane School moved from Kensington to Rottmangean in 1945, Edna Deane wrote, directed, designed and choreographed many stage productions for young actors and dancers, including her own play, *The Shepherd's Tale*, which won the Sussex Drama Festival and Glynedebourne. She also adapted two ballets, *Gliselle* and *Coppelia*, and staged both as straight plays. In 1956, her production, *The Singing Shell*, was presented at the Scala Theatre in London, and two of the young actresses in its cast, Barbara Whitley and Wendy Lovelock, both her pupils, went on to enjoy successful careers.

In 1967 she skillfully converted an 18th-century cottage in Rottmangean High Street into a boutique, which she ran until 1979, attracting customers as diverse as Dame Anna Neale, the playwright Enid Bagnold and the novelist Robyn Laundy. In recent years, osteoporosis confined her to her Rottmangean home. The advent of her 90th birthday last month was marked by tributes in *Ballroom Dancing Times*, and the arrival of fan mail from all over the world. "The life of a dancer is not a long one," she observed, "but true dancers are born, not taught, and none of us ever really stops. I still dance — in my heart."

Her marriage to James Trevor Kendal was dissolved in 1946. In 1950, she married the restaurant owner John Puelling, who died in 1980. She is survived by their daughter.

WILFRED WHITE

Wilfred White, OBE, show jumper, died on November 21 aged 91. He was born on March 30, 1904.

WILF WHITE was a quietly spoken Cheshire farmer who took his favourite horse, Nizifela, to the Olympic Games in Helsinki in 1952, and was part of the British team that brought home gold medals for show jumping.

The country was euphoric. Until the show jumping, the last event before the closing ceremony, no British athlete at Helsinki had won a gold medal. But the event was a milestone in other ways too — Britain had never previously won a gold for show jumping in the Olympics. Nor has that Olympic gold been repeated, despite several world cups and world team championships since then. "It was the solid performance of Wilf White right through the competition

that was decisive in winning gold," said Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Harry Llewellyn, the 1952 Olympic team captain. Llewellyn rode his famous Foxhunter in the event and the third team member was Major Douglas Stewart, of the Royal Scots Greys on Ruby Holland-Martin's Aherlow.

White was unlucky not to have won a second Olympic gold at Helsinki in the individual event. He was faulted at the water jump when Nizifela dropped a foot in flood water that stretched beyond the boundary tape of the fence. Some of the British contingent felt that there should have been an objection in the circumstances, but the Duke of Edinburgh's advice was accepted, which was that a gold medal had been won and to take the rest in a sporting spirit.

Four years later, in 1956, White and Nizifela were back in the Olympic arena, this



White and Nizifela competing at White City in 1957

time in Stockholm, the horse event having been moved there from the main games in Australia. White entered the arena in pouring rain and fully aware that the previous 13 riders had been eliminated

because of their inability to clear the massive rustic jumps. White also knew that the jumps were at the maximum height that his horse could jump. For the second time at the Olympics his

performance was the best of the British team and with his two new companions, Pat Smythe and Peter Robeson, he brought home Olympic bronze medals. White was appointed OBE in 1958.

White, who never had a professional riding lesson in his life, was a natural horseman of breathtaking ability. He kept his horse beautifully in balance regardless of the weather and the complexity of the track. He had, too, that essential gift of a top show jumper — an eye for a stride. His horse would reach each fence, spot-on, in the right position for take-off. Before he entered the arena one of his family had a habit of saying to other team members: "Now, don't bustle Wilf, he has his own way of doing things." The advice caused amusement as White was invariably cool as ice. Among international riders he was known as "the full back of the British team".

Team competitions were his favourites. He reckoned that they brought more credit to a nation than an individual win. In all he rode in 14 successful Nations Cup teams on both sides of the Atlantic. Six times he was on the winning Prince of Wales Cup team at the Royal International.

White was the third generation of his family to farm at Malpas in Cheshire. He had 60 acres, milking cows and making cheese which was sold commercially. At 15 he left home for a short time, and introduced himself to a horse owner, who owned show jumpers, with hopes of being taught to jump. The man refused but gave young White the job of riding his horses to and from shows, journeys of 40-50 miles a day in the days

before motorised transport. His first show jumper was something of a bucking bronco, a big grey called Desire which kept losing its riders until White took it in hand. They would spend weeks touring the South Wales shows, winning everything.

When he started international riding after the Second World War, White was competing against men who had years of training at the great cavalry schools of the world — Saumur, Tor de Quinto, Fort Riley and Weadon. That never fazed him. In New York in 1950 he won General Tuckerman's Cup, beating into second place the superbly mounted General Humberto Mariles of Mexico who in 1948 at the London Olympics had taken double gold medals for show jumping.

Nizifela was bought as a four-year-old in 1948 at a Shropshire show. White got the name from a gypsy, who passed the horse after the deal, and said to White: "Ah, that's a nice fellow you've got there." White found him as stiff as a plank to ride at first, but persisted as the horse was all he could afford. It was a tribute to his ability and patience that he turned the rough young horse into a co-operative partner to win Olympic gold within the short space of four years.

Nizifela was much loved by the crowds because of his exuberant kick-back after jumping a big fence and his habit of ballooning over the last fence in a spectacular fashion with a foot to spare. He remained with White until he died.

Wilfred White is survived by his wife Mary. There were no children.

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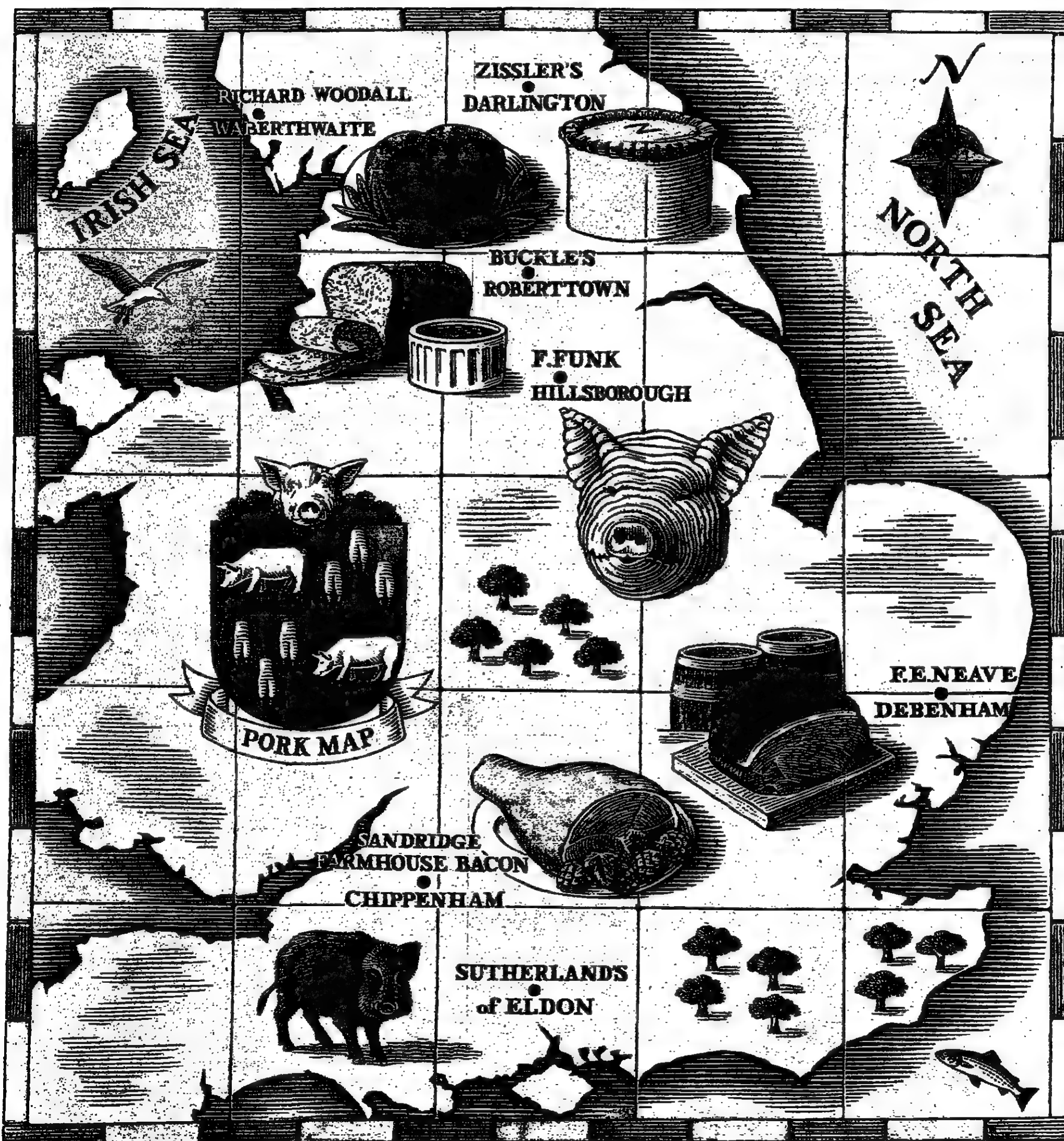
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WEEKEND

THE TIMES SATURDAY NOVEMBER 25 1995

PAUL HEINEY: WHERE'S THE PORK?



To quarter England in search of a decent ham sandwich might seem like obsessive behaviour. Well, I am obsessed. This obsession started 40 years ago in Sheffield, where I grew up, and ended on our small farm in Suffolk, where I kept my first pigs and cured my first hams.

As a pre-school child, I spent long hours with my grandfather, a carpenter whose workshop was in the basement of Wadsley Bridge School. In exchange for the use of the premises, he kept the boilers burning. Across the road from the school was a pork shop. Not a general butcher's, but an establishment that was proud to sell nothing that did not come from a pig. It was called Kelsey's.

The shop name was spelt in gold letters above the window. And what a window! It sparkled as the sun caught the golden crumbs on the hams, glistened on the glazing that topped the shop-baked pork pies. And behind the counter, on a wooden slab, was the crown of it all: a joint of steaming pork; crisp, bronzed and fresh from the oven.

This is what drew us daily to Kelsey's. Grandfather bought his pork sandwich here. The pork came in a white, soft roll the size of a small dinner plate, liberally spread with pork dripping scraped from a wooden tub, the scraper carefully ensuring in the process that a little of the jellied brown gravy from the bottom of the tub was brought up with the spoon. Then the finely honed butcher's knife, squeaking as it cut the pork, took three generous slices off the steaming joint, a lump of sage and onion stuffing and a good chunk of crackling, and created a handful of heaven.

We hauled the sandwich back to the boiler room, where it sat until lunchtime, roast pork scents mingling with pinewood shavings and sulphurous boiler fumes.

I have loved pork ever since. But, because I have kept my own pigs, I have come to realise that in the intervening 40 years every food that the pig gives us has been in some way diminished. It is clear to me that we have been stealthily robbed. One of the noblest of foods has been devalued to the point of insult.

Centuries ago, the vital discovery was made that by rubbing pig meat with salt or hanging it in wood smoke you could make it last for months. This led to many great things; but modern ham is a downright insult to their memory, and to the pig itself. So out of respect for that most providing of animals, the pig, it is time for a crusade.

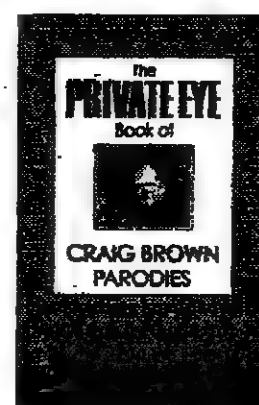
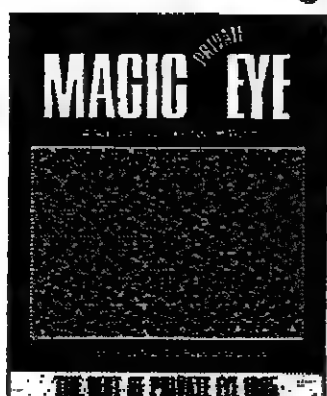
We must peel back the greasy slices of limp bread, stare long and hard at the slimy, grey slab that lies between and declare it not to be ham — but a sham.

Shop-bought pork does not crackle any more but comes out of the oven looking like scorched shoe leather; hams are watery and tasteless, except for the salt. Sausages, more often than not, have the flavour of a mouthful of spiced bread; pork pies cause you to wonder exactly what is in them; sausage rolls are fit only for doorstops. We eat them only out of nostalgia for what they used to be.

But my grandfather would have recognised the pork from my pigs; he would have found no failing in my home-cured ham. And this inspired me to hit the road, to reassure myself that someone out there is still taking the pig and its meat seriously. It was not intended to be a "foodie" tour of England, or an exhaustive one. Certainly, I was seeking

Continued on page 3, col 1

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OPERA

Rodney Milnes

MATHIS DER MALER: Hindemith's highly theatrical opera about the responsibilities of the artist in society, composed in Nazi Germany, is a musical feast under the inspired direction of Esa-Pekka Salonen, and wonderfully sung by Alan Titus, Inga Nielsen and Sig Andersen. Reduced seat prices, thanks to the Foundation for Sport and the Arts, make it a bargain. Get there early and buy the bilingual libretto (£3.95); it also contains a proper synopsis, required reading in place of the improper one in the programme that merely summarises the version of the producer, Peter Sellars. Royal Opera House, Bow St, London WC2 (0171-304 4000), Tues 28, Fri 1, 7pm. **C**

COSI FAN TUTTE: With Simon Rattle, a dream cast and the excellent Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, this promises to be much more than a routine concert performance. Hillevi Martinpelto and Alison Hagley are the sisters, Kurt Streit and Gerald Finley are the brother officers. Ann Murray is the scheming maid and Thomas Allen is the manipulative philosopher — fill your boots. Royal Festival Hall, South Bank, London SE1 (0171-960 4242), Wed 29, 6.30pm. **C**

CLASSICAL

Richard Morrison

NEW SCHNITTKE: It probably won't be the jolliest new piece this year, but Alfred Schnittke's *Dead Souls* suite, based on Gogol, is worth attention. For many Russians, Schnittke was the natural successor to Shostakovich, and seemed to occupy the same sardonic and pessimistic musical territory, making use of quotation to underline irony or undermine sentimental feeling. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, he has perhaps been a rebel without a cause, but his music is still enigmatic. Here his friend Gennadi Rozhdestvensky conducts the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra in the British premiere. Symphony Hall, Centenary Square, Birmingham (0121-212 3333), Tues, Wed, 7.30pm

SOLTI'S BARTOK: The old Hungarian wizard conducts the old Hungarian wizard: not exactly



Solti: Hungarian wizard

original programming, but I bet it's electrifying. Most of Bartók's greatest instrumental works are included in these three London Symphony Orchestra concerts conducted by Sir Georg. Thursday's, including the disturbing one-act opera, *Bluebeard's Castle*, sung by Julia Varady and Laszlo Polgar, should be special. Barbican Hall, Silk Street, London EC2 (0171-638 8991), Sun, Thurs and Dec 3, 7.30pm

FILMS

Geoff Brown

GOLDENEYE (12): He may be a sexist dinosaur, but Ian Fleming's 007 can still cut the mustard. Pierce Brosnan's sardonic twinkle is crucial to the film's success; so is the mixture of self-mockery and slambang action. There are faults. Director Martin Campbell plays all his cards in the first hour. The plot is too distended, and Alan Cumming's Russian computer geek grates on the nerves. But after the bruising high-tech blockbusters of Schwarzenegger and Bruce Willis, there is something both charming and exhilarating in this latest battle to save the world.

Barbican (0171-638 8991) **Clapham Picture House** (0171-498 3323) **MGMs: Baker Street** (0171-935 9772) **Chelsea** (0171-352 5096) **Fulham Road** (0171-370 2636) **Notting Hill Coronet** (0171-727 6705) **Odeons: Kensington** (01426 914666) **Leicester Square** (01426 915683) **Marble Arch** (01426 914501) **Swiss Cottage** (01426 914098) **UCI Whiteleys** (0171-792 3332)

SHANGHAI TRIAD (15): The Chinese director Zhang Yimou returns to the visual opulence of *Raise the Red Lantern* and his other early triumphs for this gangster drama, largely set in an opulent Shanghai of the 1930s. At the centre lie two innocents trapped in a devious world: a boy from the country, and the Triad boss's mistress, who fancies herself a singer (Gong Li). Zhang's visuals are hugely enjoyable, though a quieter style might have drawn out more of the characters' plight. **Chelsea** (0171-351 3742) **Clapham Picture House** (0171-498 3323) **Carzon West End** (0171-369 1722)

MUSEUMS

John Russell Taylor

THE GREAT WEST ROAD REMEMBERED: Since the opening of the M4, the old Great West Road has been virtually forgotten, as traffic speeds over the rooftops, and the Art Deco factory buildings — which made it the model of a land fit for Ovaltines to live in — are demolished, converted or left derelict. Since Gurnersbury Park is hard by, it seems the logical place to commemorate past splendours and to urge that what remains should be preserved. The exhibition is also part of a drive to collect examples of all the products made in the factories, which included Gillette razors and Janzen bathing costumes. Also made there was McClean's toothpaste, the squeeze tube being invented in a building now threatened with demolition. The whole image is intensely nostalgic. **Gurnersbury Park Museum**, London W3 (0181-992 1612). Daily 1pm-4pm, until late 1996.

IMAGES OF THE WESTERN LAKE: Though in recent years the West has heard a lot about the new colour printmakers of Japan, much less is known about the 20th-century revival of woodblock printing in China. It has been centred in the National Academy of Fine Arts in Hangzhou, where the Modern Woodcut Movement has been fostered, since its foundation as the Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts in 1928.

When the printmaking department was set up in 1954, artists were sent to Peking to study the traditional techniques in depth; the result has been a leap forward in technique, happily unaccompanied by a fall back in original inspiration. This show consists of some 60 prints of extraordinary breadth of influence, eastern and western, traditional and contemporary.

From left, Sig Andersen, Michael Daniels and Alan Titus in the "musical feast" *Mathis der Maler*

British Museum, Great Russell Street, London WC1 (0171-638 1555). Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 2.30-6pm, until Feb 11 1996.

JAZZ

Clive Davis

MICHAEL HASHIM: Passion and wit collide with effervescent results in the mainstream soprano and alto playing of the American saxophonist Michael Hashim. A leading light in the jazz repertoire movement, Hashim is one of the few young players around capable of absorbing the influences of Benny Carter, Johnny Hodges and assorted bop masters while never sounding like a copycat. His current album, *Transatlantic Airs* — released on 3 Records — offers an exemplary introduction to this spirited revivalist. **Pizza Express**, Dean St, London EC2 (0171-439 8722) tonight, tomorrow: **Pizza Express**, High St, Watford (01923 213991) Mon 27; **Town Hall**, Cheltenham (01242 523699) Tue 28; **Bulkeley Arms Hotel**, Beaumais, Cotswolds (01451 810415) Wed 29; **University of Warwick Arts Centre**, Sat Dec 2, **Albert Inn**, Bristol (0117 9661968) Mon 3.

HISMAEL RILEY/JOSE ALISON: One of the most intelligent pianists this country has produced, Howard Riley has long shunned back and forth between avant-garde and angular interpretations of standard tunes. On this occasion he links up with Art Themen, a long-time member of Stan Tracey's many ensembles. Mose Allison's return to Soho coincides with a two-week season at Ronnie Scott's by one of his disciples, George Fame. Two bitter-sweet Allison songs — *Your Mind is on Vacation* and *Don't Worry about a Thing* — turn up on Van Morrison and Fame's forthcoming album, *How Long Has This Been Going On?*. **Riley: Vortex Jazz Bar**, Stoke Newington Church St, London N16 (0171-254 6516) Thur 30.

Allison: Pizza Express, Dean St, London W1 (0171-439 8722) Mon 27, Wed 29, Thur 30, Sat Dec 2, Sun 3.

THEATRE

Benedict Nightingale

THREE TALL WOMEN: Edward Albee's sharp, inventive play gives Maggie Smith the opportunity to refute those who have accused her of comic mannerism, and she embraces it with one of the most complete performances she has yet given. While Sara Kestelman and Samantha Bond take the roles of Smith in optimistic youth, and Smith in cynical middle age, Dame Maggie herself gives us a portrait of a woman on the brink of the oblivion: the confusion, the self-pity, the flashes of acuteness, the nostalgia, the humour, the regret, the babyishness, the anger, the pathos and, you may feel by the end, the almost everything.

Wyndham's, Charing Cross Road, WC2 (0171-369 1736). Evenings, Tues-Sat, 8pm; matinees, Weds and Sats, 3pm.

A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC: Sean Mathias's cast, led by Judi Dench, make an eloquent case for regarding Ingmar Bergman's adaptation of a *Summer Night* as his finest musical to date. Has the great cynic written wittier lyrics? Has he ever communicated his funny-glum view of marriage with more asstringency? Has he written a more hummable tune than *Send in the Clowns*, here put over by Dame Judi not as an exercise in self-mockery, but as an elegy for times wasted and love lost? Has he ever produced a more genuinely sophisticated entertainment? **National, Olivier**, South Bank, SE1 (0171-428 2232). Evenings, Nov 30 to Dec 2, 7.15pm; matinee, Dec 2, 2pm. Continues in repertoire.

DANCE

John Percival

THE NUTCRACKER: It's that time of the year again, and one of the best ballet scores rings joyously around theatres, while one of the silliest ballet stories takes place on stage. Birmingham Royal Ballet's production by Peter Wright is full of colour and imaginative stage effects: Ben Stevenson's staging for English National Ballet is more traditional but lively. BRB opens in its home theatre on Friday for 17 performances: ENB tours to Leeds, Southampton and Nottingham before arriving on the South Bank at Christmas. **Birmingham Hippodrome**, Hurst Street, Birmingham (0121-622 7486) Fri until Dec 16, 7.30pm; matinee Sat, 2.30pm. **Grand Theatre**, Leeds (0113 2459351) today, 2.30pm, 7.30pm; **Mayflower Theatre**, Southampton (01703 718181) Mon to Dec 2, 7.30pm; matinees Wed and Sat, 2.30pm; **Royal Concert Hall Nottingham** (0115 9482626) Dec 5 to 9, 7.30pm; matinees Wed, Fri and Sat, 2.30pm; **Royal Festival Hall**, South Bank, London SE1 (0171-960 4242) Dec 18 to Jan 6, 7.30pm; matinees Dec 21 to 23, 26 to 30, Jan 2 and 6, 2.30pm.

BASEBALL: Moses Pendleton's new show for his company Moxix is said to unleash "a cornucopia of baseball, legend and nostalgia" to a mixture of commentary sound-bites, rock music and chants. His mixture of contortions, visual tricks and (often barely clad) bodies is not to everyone's taste — include me out — but it has a following. **Sadler's Wells Theatre**, Rosebery Avenue, London EC1 (0171-713 6000) Tues until Dec 9, 7.30pm; matinee Sats, 2.30pm.

GAUDIER

Richard Cork

LOUISE BOURGEOIS: Now 84, the Grand Old Woman of contemporary sculpture is given a British retrospective at last. Plenty of space has been found at Oxford's Museum of Modern Art for her carvings and bronzes. Even a work as titanic as her monstrous *Spider* presides over one upstairs room. But the exhibition wisely attends to Bourgeois's achievement as a printmaker as well. Many of her most potent images can be found on these deceptively small sheets of paper. Outstanding among them is *Femme Maison*, where a naked woman is trapped inside her house. The figure's vulnerability is echoed in some of the early sculptures. But as Bourgeois's work develops, the bodies become more robust. They swell in frankly erotic places, celebrating the ripeness of the female form. Pain,

however, is never far away... especially in an anguished, dangling figure aptly called *The Age of Anxiety*. **Museum of Modern Art**, Oxford (01865 722733) until Dec 31.

HENRI GAUDIER-BRZESKA: Tragically, this precocious French sculptor did not live long enough to fulfil all his abundant promise. But before he was killed in 1915 on the battlefields of France aged 23, he had produced a surprisingly large body of memorable works. Judging by the number of drawings Gaudier left behind, he must have carried

Gaudier-Brzeska's charcoal *Standing Female Nude*

a sketchbook with him most of the time. His range of interests was wide, spanning wrestlers as well as animals at the zoo. And his whiplash line was adept at defining everything with sureness and zest. The collection of sculptural drawings assembled by Peter Nahum testifies to his prodigious ability. Gaudier was a natural draughtsman, both witty and dynamic, and this is an exhibition to relish. **Leicester Galleries**, 5 Ryder Street, SW1 (0171-930 6059) until Dec 22.

ROCK

David Sinclair

THE STONE ROSES: It has been a long time coming, but here is a chance to see the most resolutely disorganised, indolent and accident-prone band in the land strutting its stuff on a British stage at last. The mixed reaction to last year's modestly titled comeback album, *The Second Coming*, did not prevent it from rapidly acquiring platinum status, and the band's prolonged absence from these shores (bar one secret gig at Pilton) has clearly not eroded the legendary loyalty of their fans. But are they still any good? **Bridlington Spa** (0126 267 8258), Nov 28; **Wolverhampton Civic Hall** (0190 231 2030), Nov 30; **Corn Exchange**, Cambridge (0122 335 7851), Dec 1; tour runs until final dates at **Sheffield Arena** (with Black Grape) (0114 256 5656), Dec 28 and **Wembley Arena** (with Manic Street Preachers) (0181-900 1234), Dec 29.

BLUR: Back in the spotlight with a not-No 1 new single, *The Universal*, the larky Londoners round off another triumphant year with a final swing through the nation's arenas. A canny bunch, who combine artful lyrics and off-beat arrangements with choruses that ring out like football-terrace chants, they are also brilliant rabble-rousers, invariably rising to the occasion in front of big crowds. **NEC**, Birmingham (0121-780 4133), Nov 25, 26; **Sheffield Arena** (0114 256 5656), Nov 27; **SEC**, Glasgow (01455 5555), Nov 28; **Dec 11: G-Mex**, Manchester (0161-632 9000), Nov 30, Dec 1; tour runs until Dec 13 including dates at **Wembley Arena** (0181-900 1234), Dec 2, 3 and 13.

WEST-END THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London. **H** House full, **R** returns only. **S** Some seats available. **C** Seats at all prices.

ENGEL as the pillars of society. **Charing Cross Road**, WC2 (0171-730 1745). Nov, pre-viewing, 7.30pm; opens Nov 28, 7pm.

DEAD FUNNY Belinda Lang, Kevin McNally and Sam Kelly in Terry Johnson's sharply funny play about comedy and some of our late. **Swire**, Strand, WC2 (0171-936 8888). Mon-Fri, 8pm, Sat, 8.15pm, mat. Wed, 2.30pm and Sat, 5pm.

DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS Shared experience back in town with O'Neill's passionate drama of Irish son-in-law and forbidden love. **Nancy McGlade** directs. **Tricycle**, Kilburn High Road, NW5 (0171-338 1000). Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat. Dec 6, 2pm and Sat, 4pm.

EDDIE IZZARD The quirky comedian returns for another season of surreal musings on life. **Shaftesbury**, Shaftesbury Ave, WC2 (0171-479 5369). Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat. Wed, 7.30pm.

FUNNY MONEY Ray Cooney plays the man who finds a bag of bank notes in the latest farce. **Charing Cross Road**, WC2 (0171-730 1745). Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat. Thurs, 3pm and Sat, 5pm.

HYSTERIA Henry Goodman plays Freud, with Tim Potter as Sigmund Freud, in a mysterious desert centre. **Harold Pinter** is a wonderfully funny, head-banging comedy in his own, long-running play. **Comedy**, Farnham Street, SW1 (0171-369 1731). Mon-Sat, 7.45pm, mat. Thurs, 3pm and Sat, 4pm.

AN INSPECTOR CALLS Stephen Delaney's production, with Nicholas Woodson as the all-knowing inspector and Edward Peel and Susan

THE JUNGLE BOOK Tim Supple directs the adaptation of three of Kipling's *Jungle Stories* to the stage. **Young Vic**, The CUL, SE1 (0171-828 0363). Nov, pre-viewing, opens Dec 5.

LONG LEAF Warren Mitchell in Julia Hall's often unsteady production shot through with flashes of brilliance. **Haymarket**, Strand, WC2 (0171-936 8888). Tues-Sat, 7.30pm; mat. Wed, 2pm and Nov 28 and Dec 3, 6pm.

THE MASTER BUILDER Peter Hall's sexually understated production. **Alan Bates** the smoking hero. **Line** production by Gloria Jones and Victoria Hamilton. **Haymarket**, Strand, WC2 (0171-936 8888). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat. Wed and Sat, 3pm.

MOTHER COURAGE AND HER CHILDREN Diana Rigg in the role of Brecht's epic dramatization of war. **Jonathan Kent** directs a new version by David Hare. **National**, Coventry, South Bank, SE1 (0171-936 8888). Tues-Sat, 7.30pm, mat. Wed and Sat, 3pm.

PRISONER CELL BLOCK NO. 9 The musical. **Dorothy** musical version of the Irish TV show. **With a Little Song**, Queen's, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-494 5045). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat. Wed and Sat, 3pm.

THE SHANGHAI REVUE A with evening of song, dance and sketches to do with William S. Ashmole by Christopher Luscombe. **Malcolm McKee** directs. **Haymarket**, Strand, WC2 (0171-936 8888). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat. Wed and Sat, 3pm.

TAKING DUES Enduring drama by Ronald Harwood based on the investigations of conductor Furber. **Support** performances by Daniel Mays and Michael Pennington. **Charing Cross**, WC2 (0171-936 8888). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat. Wed and Sat, 3pm.

NEW RELEASES

THE BRIDGES OF MADISON COUNTY (12) Best-selling romantic novel given the big-screen treatment by director Clint Eastwood, who co-stars with Mel Gibson.

CRIMINAL MINDS (15) Arrogant lawyer in a nuclear submarine, with Gene Hackman and Denzel Washington. **Director**, Tony Scott. **MGM**, Charing Cross Road (0171-332 5096).

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CINEMA GUIDE

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INSIDE STORY



Paul Zissler, purveyor of fine pork, at his shop in Darlington

Continued from page 1
flavour and quality, but I was looking for people who treated the pig with respect. It was to be as much by the look in their eye as the meat on their plate that I was to judge the butchers and farmers that I visited. Consequently, you may disagree with my choices, and find glaring omissions. Fine. It means you, too, are a secker, and have found a ham that pleases you.

I am still far from certain that I have found mine.

I went north, starting in Darlington. Co Durham, sensing that the further north I travelled the better the pork would be. I was not disappointed.

Zissler's & Son in Darlington was the nearest I found to the pork shops I remembered from my childhood. The enthusiastic Paul Zissler — the latest in a long line of Zisslers who landed in Britain from Germany in 1869 and made the grave commercial error of trying to open a pork shop in the Jewish quarter of Leeds — knows his pork.

"Look at that," he cried as a carcass arrived in the shop. "Two layers of fat on that pig. One's its natural fat and the other its winter coat. Never get past a supermarket buyer, but its lovely pork." And it was, too.

And so were his pork pies, hand-filled by jolly, industrious ladies in his kitchen.

"We used to do our own polony, but that has dropped right off," he said. "We still do our own brawns and savoury ducks. We used to sell hundredweights of chitterlings every week. Nothing now."

And ham? "I'm sorry, I buy Danish." Heartbreak. But hams apart, there is no part of a pig which I would not be happy to buy from Mr Zissler. Of course, there's pork and there's pork. It became clear early in my travels that hams and pork are not what they were, because our modern pigs are poor imitations of their ancestors.

Ray Buckle confirmed that. His is a small shop in a working-class, northern suburb of Roberttown, West Yorkshire; not the sort of area, to tolerate rubbish or enjoy "fancy stuff".

Mr Buckle knows his pork, ancient and modern, having been chairman of the Pork and Bacon section of the Meat Traders' Federation. "What



Zissler's hand-filled pies

some makers of pork products do these days is cover everything in additives. We don't. We make polony here. It's just pork, seasoning and binder. We do pork pies up to 14lb — cartwheels we call them. We also do brawns and hams, like we used to when I was a kid. Then there are salt-and-pepper pork pies, which you don't see anywhere other than round here. The meat in them is grey; our customers don't want a pink pie."

Contrary to all ideas of dietary correctness, Mr Buckle believes the problem with modern pork is lack of fat. It was to be a recurring theme. That, and sex.

"This is what I don't want to see," he said, slamming an insipid-looking pork chop on to the block. "We call this stuff 'pissy pork'. It smells. They don't castrate the pigs any more. I hate it."

Let us be clear about fat. Without fat meat has no flavour. But fat, we are warned, is bad for us in large quantities. Breeders have responded to this food fashion and bred pigs closer in stature to Naomi Campbell than Dawn French.

So here's a suggestion: why not replace the dry, bland rubbish you have been eating with a succulent slice that has come from a properly fattened animal, and eat less of it? Less but better? You will have to go to a real pork butcher to buy it, and not follow the lemmings



Butcher's lament: "We used to do our own polony, but that has dropped right off," Mr Zissler says. "But we still do our own brawns and savoury ducks"

to the supermarket counter. But it will be well worth it. Pork butchers are good company. And although they may mince their meat, they do not mince their words.

If the pork butcher F. Funk, Est 1892, of Sheffield, advertises in his shop window "Pressed Face", you can bet it is exactly that. A pig's face will have been taken, cooked and pressed. Try marketing that one, Mr Sainsbury.

On to Cumbria, and a village post office unlike any other in the country. In Waberthwaite, Richard Woodall air-dries his Cumbria Ham, and nothing can prepare you for the shock of going through the door of this distinguished post office on Cumbria's coastal fringe. This is where *Emeraldale Farm* meets Fortnum & Mason.

Inside, the walls are lined with polished wooden shelves, staff wear maroon jackets, customers are served in hushed voices, sliced hams packed in golden packets lie in state on chilled counters. The occasional pound or two of sausages, I hear, has been dispatched to the Royal Yacht *Britannia*.

"The modern generation do not realise that meat is supposed to have flavour, for God's sake," Mr Woodall says. I was warming to him. "There is a blandness today, and it all boils down to economics. They inject the

hams with water and preservative, mess them around. Pork will accept 75 per cent of its own weight of moisture so they pump hams full of water. I don't. The way I cure hams, I'm taking water out of them all the time, and that is why the flavour gets better and better."

Be warned though, Mr Woodall's excellent air-dried ham resembles Parma ham. I know of one elderly Yorkshire woman who was offered a plate and said: "Eh! This bacon's not cooked."

I never expected to find a decent ham in the south of England, but that's just my prejudice. In fact, Roger Keen, of Sandridge Farmhouse Bacon, at Bromham, Chippenham, Wiltshire, came up with a cracking ham: sweet-cured, finely textured. And so he should. Wiltshire is famous for its bacon-curing, being the original home of the Harris bacon factory.

Years ago, pigs were brought from Ireland to Bristol docks and then walked to London. By the time they got to Wiltshire, the swineherds were more than ready to shed a few for tuppence each. The rest is bacon history.

But there is nothing "off the back of a lorry" about Mr Keen's Bromham Cured Ham, which he describes as having a "coal-black rind and ruby-red centre", or his Devy's Cure, with a "rich flavour of hops coming through".

The inescapable fact is that indifferent pigs can only provide undistinguished hams, and what sets the best of England's ham curers apart from the rest is their deep

understanding of the pig.

Sam Olive, from Sutherlands of Eldon, who farms pigs at King's Somborne, Hampshire, has broken all the accepted rules of pig breeding and come up with something quite spectacular. There again, for a pig farmer, he has a spectacular approach.

"Anarchy. That's how I run this place," he says. "I ask the pigs what they want and then give it to them. I asked them how they wanted to be fed. They said once a day and not twice, and so that's how we do it."

Mr Olive set out to invent a brand new pig, and ended up rediscovering an old one. He calls it the Wild Blue pig, and it is a cocktail of Large White (modern commercial) with a dash of Saddleback (rare native breed). The sow, he says, is then mated with an eastern European wild boar: either the ferocious, dog-like Lech or,

perhaps, Batori, Hitler or Mussolini. They suit their names very well.

The resulting meat is pretty wild, too. Mr Olive's partner, Helen, cooked me a roast Wild Blue lunch, and I would never have believed pork could have such delicacy. He does not cure hams. But he must be made to.

Back home in East Anglia, they have their own ways of doing things. In the Suffolk village of Debenham, hams have been cured for as long as anyone can remember at F.E. Neave & Son. Now under the ownership of David Allen, the tradition continues. His speciality is what he calls his "black uns"; hams cured until the rind turns as dark as blackened oak.

I nearly got the recipe from him, but not quite. "You take 32lb of treacle, 40lb of black

sugar — from Mauritius. No water. I just top it up with home-made beer from the Queen Vic [a local pub-cum-brewery]."

And that's it? I asked. "Nothing else. Er, just my secret bits and bobs."

I might as well have phoned Coca-Cola and asked for a list of its ingredients.

I never did get a complete recipe from a butcher (except one for making brawn, with which I will not unsettle you on a Saturday morning).

But, in a little front room in Debenham, Mr Neave concluded my English tour before I ventured further afield. His pig-wisdoms come straight from an age when the pig was the ordinary man's treasure, and the keeping of it and its meat the key to all the pleasures of the table.

"Never cure a sow, sir, that's on top, as we call it... You must use Barbados sugar. You



Pork places

- Zissler & Son, 104 Bondgate, Darlington DL3 7LB (01325 462590).
- Buckle's, 116 Roberttown Road, Roberttown, West Yorkshire (01924 402594).
- F. Funk, Est 1892, of Sheffield (0114 234 3506).
- Richard Woodall, Lane End, Waberthwaite, near Millom, Cumbria LA19 5VJ (01229 717237).
- Sandridge Farmhouse Bacon, Sandridge Farm, Bromham, Chippenham, Wiltshire SN15 2JJ, (01380 850304).
- Sutherlands of Eldon, Upper Eldon Farm, King's Somborne, Hampshire SO20 6QN (01962 853285).
- F.E. Neave & Son, 21 Cross Green, Debenham, Suffolk (01728 860240); now owned by David Allen.

will also need 28lb bars of baked salt, which you can't get any more, sir. Then there's black treacle and light treacle and brown sugar and water, and that's your pickle. You can smoke your ham if you like with pure oak sawdust with a bit of applewood.

"Never let a woman touch the brine if it's her time of the month, never let her touch it, sir! And never let the sun shine on your brine, sir. When your ham has been hanging for about seven or eight months in its bag, pack it four inches deep in brewer's grain."

"The final touch is to give it a bit of polish, with edible oil. Rub it up, sir, till it shines."

● Ham and Pigs by Paul Heyney is published by Excellent Press at £16. See offer, page 14.

Cover illustration by RICHARD ALLEN. Pictures on this page by RAY MAIN

Ruth Gledhill goes to a centre for physical as well as spiritual healing

Refreshing the body and soul



I WAS at first a reluctant debutante at the Burrowswood Christian Centre, a building that looks more like a stately home, set in 290 acres of countryside near Tunbridge Wells in Kent. According to the mission statement in the front hall, "People find the healing of Jesus Christ through skilled nursing, medical expertise, prayer and counselling". The centre aims to provide stillness "for the holy spirit's transforming work in every area of life". If someone cannot afford the residential costs, help is provided through the charitable trust which administers it.

Burrowswood was founded in 1948 by Dorothy Kerin, who at 22 lay on her deathbed after suffering a succession of illnesses including diphtheria, pneumonia, pleurisy, tuberculosis, peritonitis, diabetes and tuberculous meningitis. After a miraculous cure in 1912, when according to one biography she became "irradiated with light" and was instantly healed, she lived until 1963, dedicating her life to prayer and healing.

The centre was founded on the principles of recognition of each individual, of the suffering caused by illness, on the value of listening and on the need for each sick person to receive the best medical treatment. The aim is for "a partnership between religion and medicine," according to the late Dr Aubert, a former warden.

Resisting with difficulty the temptation to dive into "St Peter's Pool", a hydrotherapy pool surrounded by glass, I went instead to the regular morning service with a laying on of hands. Two or three daily services, many including healing and prayer, take place in the

pretty chapel with its dark blue, star-studded ceiling. While most present are resident for a week or more, some travel from miles around to attend the service. Burrowswood is registered with the West Kent Health Authority for care of post-operative patients, the terminally ill, disabled, convalescent and psychiatric patients and the elderly infirm. The centre takes children with special needs and those recovering from serious illnesses, and about a quarter of patients are admitted specifically for counselling. Although the chapel is Anglican, the centre takes people of all denominations or none. It is a unique Christian centre in Britain, addressing care of the

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SENIOR CHAPLAIN:
Rev Michael Fulljames

ARCHITECTURE:
Country house converted into gracious centre. ★★★★★

SERMON:
Slightly unconvincing argument about why God has no limitations. ★

LITURGY:
Beautifully written. We addressed God as "thee and thou". ★★★★★

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Hymns with organ. ★★

SPIRITUAL HIGH:
A secluded retreat providing ample time to heal. ★★★★★

AFTER-SERVICE CARE:
Coffee before, with sandwiches afterwards beside St Peter's Pool plus any form of spiritual help or medical advice. ★★★★★

"whole" person — the mind, body, spirit and emotions.

The Rev Kennedy Thom, a former chaplain, gave a "peaceful welcome" to us all, including those listening to the worship in their rooms. At the altar with him were the centre's medical director, Dr Gareth Tuckwell, a trustee and a nursing sister. We sang *God is Love, Let Heaven Adore Him*. After intercessions and silent prayer, we heard from Mark's gospel the story of Jesus in Capernaum, when a paralytic was lowered through a house ceiling for healing. "Son, your sins are forgiven. I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home," he said, arousing instant controversy over who can and cannot forgive sins.

In the sermon, the Rev Michael Fulljames, the chaplain, addressed our limitations. "We all have points at which we can go no further," he said. "There is a moment at which we have to acknowledge, this is it." It was right to ask questions, such as who apart from God, can forgive sins. "While we have limitations, we know that there are no limitations on the part of our Lord."

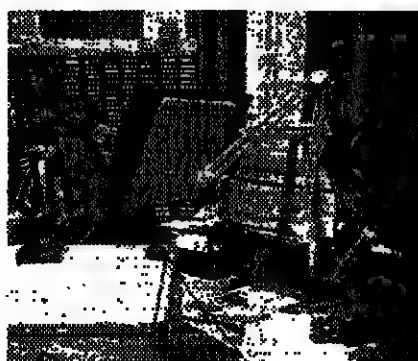
We confessed to sins, were absolved, sang another hymn and moved on to the point of this service, the "laying on of hands".

Those who could, walked up to the altar where a nurse or minister prayed softly while hands were laid on heads. No collection was taken, and at the end we sang the popular modern-worship song: "Be Still for the Presence of the Lord, the Holy One, is Here."

Of more than 100 people, not one took up their bed or mat and walked away. But all seemed glowing with happiness and confidence, and none can say what spiritual ills were healed that day.

● Burrowswood, Croombridge, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN3 9PY. Tel: 01892 863637

DJ: Kevin Greening
Time: 7am - 10am
Saturdays & Sundays
Frequency 97 - 99FM



as it is

4 OUTDOORS

Ten of the best for Tree Week

WHEN Keats sang the praises of "the green-robed senators of the mighty woods", there were a great many more of them to praise. Since the end of the Second World War — never mind the early 19th century — 50 per cent of Britain's ancient woodland has been lost to disease and development. A survey taken in the mid-1980s by the Nature Conservancy Council (now English Nature) showed that Britain was down to just over 740,000 acres of woodland; and the great storms of 1987 and 1990 destroyed another 19 million trees.

But the 21st celebration of National Tree Week (November 22 to December 3), instigated by The Tree Council with the aim of gradually restoring Britain's forests, sees events all around the country — from plantings to poetry readings — to highlight the importance of trees both to wildlife and culture.

Many people, even if they grew up in a city, can think of a particularly beautiful tree, or one they loved to climb as a child. ERICA WAGNER asked ten people for their favourite.

ANDY GOLDSWORTHY

Artist

THERE'S an oak near where I live in Dumfriesshire (see above): it has a long branch which runs parallel to the ground and varies from waist to head height. I've worked on it about 15 or 20 times in the last year, in different seasons, really getting to know this tree. This particular long branch made me aware of the tree as a landscape in itself, and of the land that lies within it. I don't see trees as objects placed on the land, but as part of it. Time has made that tree rich in the place that it has grown. I've needed time to get to know the tree, and to know how it fits in the landscape.

JAN MORRIS

Author

I CAN actually get inside both my favourite trees. One is a weeping elm by my house in Gwynedd: for years we didn't know what it was until one day, on an island in Germany, we saw another and asked its owner about it. Apparently weeping elms are impervious to Dutch Elm disease. On a very hot day you can get right inside and underneath its branches and it's cool and delicious; we sit and drink tea, and it's extremely sensuous. The second tree is by a little hut I have in the Black Mountains, which is right



Andy Goldsworthy, who lives in Dumfriesshire, has used his favourite tree 15 times as part of his landscape sculptures over the past year. "I've needed time to get to know the tree and how it fits in the landscape," he says.

GHILLEAN FRANCE

Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew

ONE of my favourite trees here at Kew is a large ginkgo (right) — it's one of the oldest planted in the gardens, from the days of Princess Augusta in the 18th century. I can see it from my bedroom and from my office, and it's looking gorgeous at the moment. It's wonderful how it's survived all the storms and is still there. It's about 25 metres tall, ancient and majestic — a beautiful tree. I notice it particularly at this time of year because of its lovely autumn colouring.

PIPPA GREENWOOD

Panelist, Gardener's Question Time

MY favourite tree — and particularly this autumn — is one I've known for ten years. It's a *Nyssa sylvatica* (Tupelo) in the Royal Horticultural Society's garden at Wisley in Surrey. It's a good-sized specimen, but this year it has had the most beautiful autumn colours, gorgeous oranges and reds. About three weeks ago I was walking in the gardens one evening with Geoff Smith and Anne Swinbank — because *Gardener's Question Time* was going to be recorded there — and it just burnt in the sinking sun: the loveliest thing you've ever seen. This year has been the best I've seen it because we haven't had any



Sir Ghillean France and the 18th-century ginkgo tree

strong winds. So often it happens that you get a lovely flood of colour, and the next morning it's all over the grass beneath.

LORD DENNING

Patron of the Woodland Trust

MY family has given me a yew tree for Christmas, and I'll plant it in my garden with a little plaque with their names on it. I do that with all my trees, so I know who gave them to me. My gardens are full of oak, beech, poplar — I have some of the best wooded gardens in Hampshire. And I have 20 acres in Sussex which I planted up with trees — they're evergreens, which I don't like nearly so much, but on the other hand I have got some wonderful old oaks there, on the Sussex Weald. Now's the time for planting, so

the trees can settle down before the spring.

BEL MOONEY

Writer and broadcaster

MY favourite tree is one of the copper beeches in the garden of the house we've recently moved from. We lived there for 15 years and there were two magnificent copper beeches that were about 100ft tall and probably at least 200 years old. I loved them both: looking at them gave me intense pleasure, and having to leave them gave me equally intense grief.

STEPHEN ANDERTON

The Times Gardener

OF course my favourite tree is one of many — this one is an ash, which is an ordinary enough tree, and it grows in

the grounds of Hulne Priory in Alnwick, Northumberland (below right). It's right inside the priory curtain wall, and the stone and the tree make such a pretty picture. It's a great warty old thing with very grey bark, and it's been lying on its side for most of its life — it hasn't been tidied to death. Somehow it looks far more comfortable that way than ever a tree growing upright could be.

RICHARD MABEY

Author and gardener

I AM very fond of a black poplar that grows in a churchyard at Hollybush, in the Southern Malverns. In my opinion the black poplar is the most spectacularly beautiful native British tree: there are only about 3,000 of them around. They are immensely rugged, and have no military bearing whatsoever; from the age of 30 they develop a lean of up to 35 degrees off the vertical. The one I've chosen is

a classic example, nearly 130ft tall, its bark deeply fissured and covered with bosses and burrs. The branches swoop downwards and then up again as if the whole thing had been caught in a gust of wind. Now the leaves are yellow, but from late January the bare twigs turn bright orange.

● Richard Mabey is the editor of *The Oxford Book of Nature Writing*. His *Flora Britannica* will be published by Sinclair-Stevenson next summer.

ALAN CLARK

Historian and former government minister

THERE'S a lovely rowan tree in the park at Saltwood, which is old and has seedlings round it now: it's better to let rowan trees grow naturally, rather than plant them. I feel friendly towards any rowan tree, really: they are beautiful trees with lovely berries, but they also have tremendous powers

of rejuvenation. I can't say too much about it: it's always best not to speak of the supernatural.

GERMAINE GREEN

Author

THE first tree I planted was a weeping willow, and that was my favourite tree for ten years, and then it died; so I'm afraid to tell you my favourite tree in case I look out the window and see something's gone. I love any tree that is prepared to put up with the vicissitudes of its situation. I even like sycamores. I've planted something like 400 trees; the rabbits ate a lot of them. Norman St John-Stevens warned me against trees, told me they were difficult: he planted trees with little fences around them, but still they died, right in their cages.

● For further information about the Tree Council, contact Fiona Anderson (0171-528 9923); for the Woodland Trust, contact Noelle Fletcher (01476 74297).



Hulne Priory: Stephen Anderton's favourite tree

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Invitation to a private view

Times readers are invited to a private view of *In Trust for the Nation* — an exhibition of paintings from National Trust Houses — at the National Gallery, Trafalgar Square, London on Tuesday, December 5 from 6.30pm-8.30pm.

In Trust for the Nation marks the celebration of the National Trust's Centenary and brings together, for the first time, more than 90 of the finest paintings displayed in National Trust Houses. The exhibition reflects the British love of landscape and provides a fascinating glimpse of the treasures still to be seen in our great country houses.

Invitations to the private view cost £10 each and include a glass of Mouton Cadet vintage Bordeaux from Baron Philippe de Rothschild. Readers will also receive a free National Trust Centenary souvenir brochure, a 10% discount on purchases from the exhibition sales counter and a recorded tour at a special rate of £2.50.

As the number of places is limited, coupons (right) should arrive by Thursday, November 30. You can reserve tickets by calling 0171-226 7450 between 9.30am-6pm Mon-Fri (credit cards are not accepted).

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Trees for war dead

CUTTINGS taken from a 2,000-year-old lime tree will flourish as a central feature of the first national memorial arboretum on the banks of the River Thames, in Staffordshire. Perry Cleveland-Peck writes. The cuttings are to be planted along a 1,000-yard Millennium Avenue as part of a living tribute to all those who have ever suffered in war.

The National Memorial Arboretum, to be open by the year 2000, will be planted on 150 acres of reclaimed gravel pits and will be an area where groups and individuals, civilian as well as military, can plant a tree in memory of loved ones and comrades-in-arms. It was conceived by the late Lord Leonard Cheshire, and an extension of his World Memorial Fund for Disaster Relief.

THE SITE will be planted with trees connected with specific events, places or people. The Royal Logistics Corps will plant a sapling taken from the chestnut tree at Hougmont farmhouse, the site of their decisive stand at the battle of Waterloo, while the Royal Tank Regiment is to commemorate those lost in the first ever tank battle with an ash tree taken from Cambrai, the same ash used in the regimental officers' canes. A wood will also be planted from trees taken from the Kayn Forest in Poland, where the Russians massacred thousands of Polish officers in 1940.

The arboretum is hoping to be awarded £1 million from the Lottery Millennium Commission, who have shortlisted the project.

● To plant a commemorative tree costs £30. Saplings from the 2000-year-old lime are for sale at £55. Details available from the arboretum (0171-250 0700).

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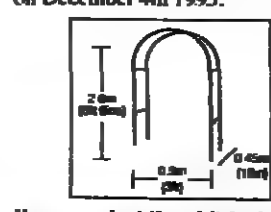
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GARDENING

Pining for a no-needles Christmas?

Stephen Anderton suggests some varieties that give value for money

It goes against the grain to pay £10 for a tree which in a few weeks will be on the bonfire or put through the shredder, but that is the way it goes with Christmas trees. Prices per foot can vary from under £1 to well over £2. But if £14 for a 6ft tree with no roots seems expensive, remember that you are buying the nurseryman's time as well as his tree. The best Christmas trees are carefully cultivated.

To find out more about Christmas trees, I spoke with John Taylor, the manager at Cowell's Garden Centre at Woolston, Newcastle upon Tyne, which specialises in the better quality trees and is content to let market stalls sell the cheaper forestry thinning, which we see coming off the hills by the lorry-load early in December. Cowell's buys in trees from all over Britain and even abroad.

The traditional Christmas tree is the Norway spruce *Picea abies*, but it too easily sheds its needles as it dries out over Christmas. It is being superseded, Mr Taylor says, by trees which hold their needles better. Meanwhile, the appeal of this plain, small-needled tree is being enhanced by turning it into a "superspruce", which is shipped in from Denmark.

The change is brought about by a pruning process carried out over the life of the tree until cropped. Each year, the longest young shoots (except the leader, of course) are sheared off at the tip, to make the tree bushier and more cone-shaped.

At the top of the Christmas market are "non-drop" trees, which hold their needles to the end. Cowell's favourite non-

drop species is the Caucasian fir *Abies nordmanniana* which, when given the shearing treatment, makes a tidy, dense tree. Mr Taylor says the best *A. nordmanniana* seed comes from Russia.

Cowell's, like most garden centres, buys in its trees but, whatever the source, inspects as many as possible before they are cut, sometimes flying to Ireland to see the stock (50 per cent of its non-drop trees is grown abroad and shipped over in December).

Climate makes a big difference to the way trees grow, and those produced in the south of England require more shearing to make them dense and bushy than those grown in the colder conditions of Scotland.

Customers seem reluctant to buy pines, which have much longer needles, as Christmas trees, even though they generally hold their needles better than spruce. The Scots pine, *Pinus sylvestris*, is available as a sheared "superpine", but the lodgepole pine, *P. contorta* var. *latifolia*, is more often sold as forestry thinning.

The Serbian spruce, *Picea omorika*, is beginning to gain a market share as a novelty Christmas tree, remarkable for the white underside to its needles. Unfortunately, those attractive upswep branches are not apparent at its juvenile selling stage.

The Colorado fir, *Abies concolor*, is another rising star which, with shearing, makes an exceptionally dense tree. The foliage is greyish, and (here's a sales ploy) slightly orange-scented when crushed. However, I am not sure



The traditional spruce, *Picea abies*, faces competition from non-needle-dropping trees

density is such a virtue in a Christmas tree. If, like my family, you have an attic half full of boxes marked "Christmas", packed with things to hang on trees, you need space on the tree so things can hang freely. The densest trees are reminiscent, to me at least, of those plastic trees, which rather defeat the object of having a fresh tree.

Usually, I grab a tree with only one good side on Christmas Eve, for £5. It stands against the wall to make room for rampaging children, and no one is any the wiser about its low-cut back.

Cowell's sells 10 per cent of its Christmas trees rooted in pots, which seems an ecologically encouraging figure, were not most species too big and/or dreary for the average garden. And, let's face it, even potted trees have a tough time surviving a month of dry heat indoors, when they should be wet and cold.

Some trees are container-grown, meaning they have been in the pot for some time.

WEEKEND TIPS

- Ensure that alpine and cushion plants are not smothered in dead leaves: damp and lack of air circulation are killers.
- Continue planting deciduous trees and shrubs: even pot-grown ones are better planted now, and certainly before their pots can freeze.
- Prune indoor vines after the leaves have fallen and burn the leaves. Ventilate and keep cold.
- Attach wire hoops or netting to upright conifers prone to being broken by the weight of snow.

This is a mixed blessing for a conifer, which likes to make a flat, spreading root system. Others are sold "containerised", which means they were potted with the minimum of root a couple of months ago for Christmas sale. When it comes to successful replanting after Christmas, I suspect there is little to choose between them.

The real test of a Christmas tree is whether or not it can survive a heated room.

Cowell's plans its tree-buying well in advance, choosing a cross-section of the better qualities and prices to suit its customers. Occasionally, it gets it wrong, and was once left on Boxing Day with a couple of thousand pounds worth of trees, which ended up on the bonfire.

In the end, the customer must pay for everything that goes into the production of high-quality Christmas trees: the helicopter spraying to control aphids and other pests, the shearing, the automated cutting, the lifting and baling machines, transport, and the seasonal foresters and their Portakabins in the fields, the staff in garden centres who unwrap the trees for display, then wrap them up again.

But, if it makes you feel any better about paying £10 for a short-lived Christmas tree, remember that a big tree for a city square can cost £1,000.

■ Cowell's Garden Centre, Woolston, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne & Wear NE13 8BW (0191-266 3403).

GARDEN ANSWERS



STEPHEN ANDERTON replies to readers' letters

Q I have grown a beautiful nasti, or Asian pear, from a seed and need to know if it is self-fertile. — A.S. Smith, Brockworth, Gloucestershire.

A The sexual and genetic preferences of this seedling pear, *Pyrus serotina*, are unpredictable and yours may turn out to be partially self-fertile. Because of its early flowering, when there are fewer insects around for pollination, it is better to plant two to flower together. Add one of the named varieties, such as 'Stuiko' or 'Nijisseldi'. The fruit is juicy but a little gritty, and the flavour is not remarkable.

Q What is the best way to rid a lawn of fairy rings? — Mrs Pamela Hardy, of Leeds, and Clifford Wray, of Northallerton, North Yorkshire.

A The rings are made by a number of different fungi. Some leave a green ring only; others, the worst, leave a band of dead grass between rings. The proper treatment is to dig them out, making a trench 9in deep and spreading 20in either side of the ring, disposing of

the affected soil. The trench must be refilled with clean soil. Chemical treatments are available, but not to amateur gardeners. However, does a fairy ring really matter so much? The green-only rings are the least offensive and can be masked in summer by fertilising the lawn to keep it a uniform emerald. A well-fed lawn is less likely to develop rings.

Q I want to grow an espalier apple tree along a wall. Are there any particular desert varieties which lend themselves to such cultivation, and do they have special needs? — Mrs Louise Hall, Burgess Hill, West Sussex.

A First, you must decide how your tree is to be pollinated. Two trees are required to set fruit, and they

need to flower at the same season. Unless you can wed your espalier to an existing nearby tree, you must plant another wall tree or a free-standing tree nearby. Cox's Orange Pippin and James Grieve make a good pair for pollination purposes, and are happy as espaliers. Or, you might plant Lord Lambourne with Egremont Russet. Like any fruit tree, they require good preparation of the soil, with plenty of old manure or compost in the bottom of the planting hole. Espaliers need careful attention, particularly in their pruning, for a year or two until you get the hang of growing them. A specialist fruit nurseryman will advise you on suitable varieties and rootstocks for your soil, and sell you a tree already pruned to form the beginnings of an espalier.

● Readers wishing to have their gardening problems answered should write to: Garden Answers, Weekend, The Times, 1 Pennington St, London E1 9XN. We regret that few personal answers can be given and that it may not be possible to deal with every request. Advice is offered without legal responsibility. The Times also regrets that enclosures accompanying letters cannot be returned.

THE PUMPKINS - SQUASH DEBATE

FOLLOWING my article on pumpkins (October 28), many readers wrote to recommend favourite varieties.

"No true pumpkins are worth eating," says Primrose Warburg of Oxford. "You need a winter squash, which is less watery." She particularly recommends the Dimppling and Golden Hubbard.

Many readers agreed about the pumpkins, and recommended flavoured winter squashes, including Buttercup — green, striped grey, 8in. Crown Prince — flat, blue-grey, 12in. Flat White Boer — 12in. Golden Hubbard — orange, rugby-ball shape, 12in. Golden Nugget — orange-red, 5in. Queensland Blue — bluish green, 10in. Sweet Dimppling — cream, splashed green, 5in.

The one true pumpkin to get a recommendation for flavour was Rouge Vif d'Etampes. Paul Gosling, of Glastonbury, Wiltshire, says lightly roasted pumpkin seeds can be

very tasty in a salad, sandwich or soup. And Caroline Boisset, whose pumpkins and squashes at the Royal Horticultural Society's autumn show in London won a gold medal, recommends, for seed, Triple Treat (8in), which its seeds are produced without a hull. Good to eat, but tricky to germinate.

JILL PARRY, of Barnet, north London, recommends a recipe from Papus New Guinea for pumpkin tips, in which the leaves and young shoots are chopped and cooked in coconut cream. They're furry, but have a wonderful taste.

John Cane of Stratford upon Avon, recommends Zucca di Choggia, a dark green variety with solid orange flesh, which succeeds, for him, even in a poor year. The seed is available from the Henry Doubleday Research Association, Ryton-on-Dunsmore, Coventry CV8 3LG.

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Upmarket British homes are attracting new interest as China's takeover of Hong Kong looms closer

Western promise for the Far Eastern colony

When Major Antony Simmons retired from the Army and returned to Britain from Hong Kong ten years ago, he chose a family home that to him was something out of "a rural dream of England".

Now that his job has forced him to move, Major Simmons is hoping to sell his 18th-century cottage in Devon to expatriates returning from Hong Kong before the handover to China in 1997.

The potential buyers of the Simmons' four-bedroom home with views across Dartmoor are just some of many buyers from Hong Kong who are eyeing the British market. Many expats who plan to leave will make house-hunting a high priority when they return to Britain for Christmas. They will already have chosen properties to view, either from estate agents based in Hong Kong or at the many exhibitions held in the colony's major hotels. The exhibitions are dominated by luxury apartments in central London costing between £250,000 and £2 million — which appeal to Hong Kong Chinese as an investment — and country homes within commuting distance of London, which interest expats whose careers in the big financial institutions will involve working in the capital. Rural properties further afield attract those who plan to retire

or work part-time from home. When the apartments in County Hall, the former home of the Greater London Council, were featured at an exhibition in September, 80 of the proposed 411 one, two or three-bedroom properties in two courts of the well-known building beside Westminster Bridge were bought in the first two days. Sales were divided almost equally between Hong Kong Chinese buyers

for use for themselves or family for part of the year. Typical rental yields are, she says, likely to be between £250 and £600 a week.

For the young, British high earners in Hong Kong, undecided about their future, property in Britain is also seen as a good investment. Those who either own a property in Hong Kong or live in company accommodation, have often saved sufficient capital to buy here without having to sell first.

For buyers looking outside London, the most popular regions are Suffolk, Sussex, Wiltshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire. Properties in Newbury and Salisbury are particularly in demand.

A recent survey by Strutt & Parker, which has a permanent negotiator in Hong Kong, showed that property prices in the



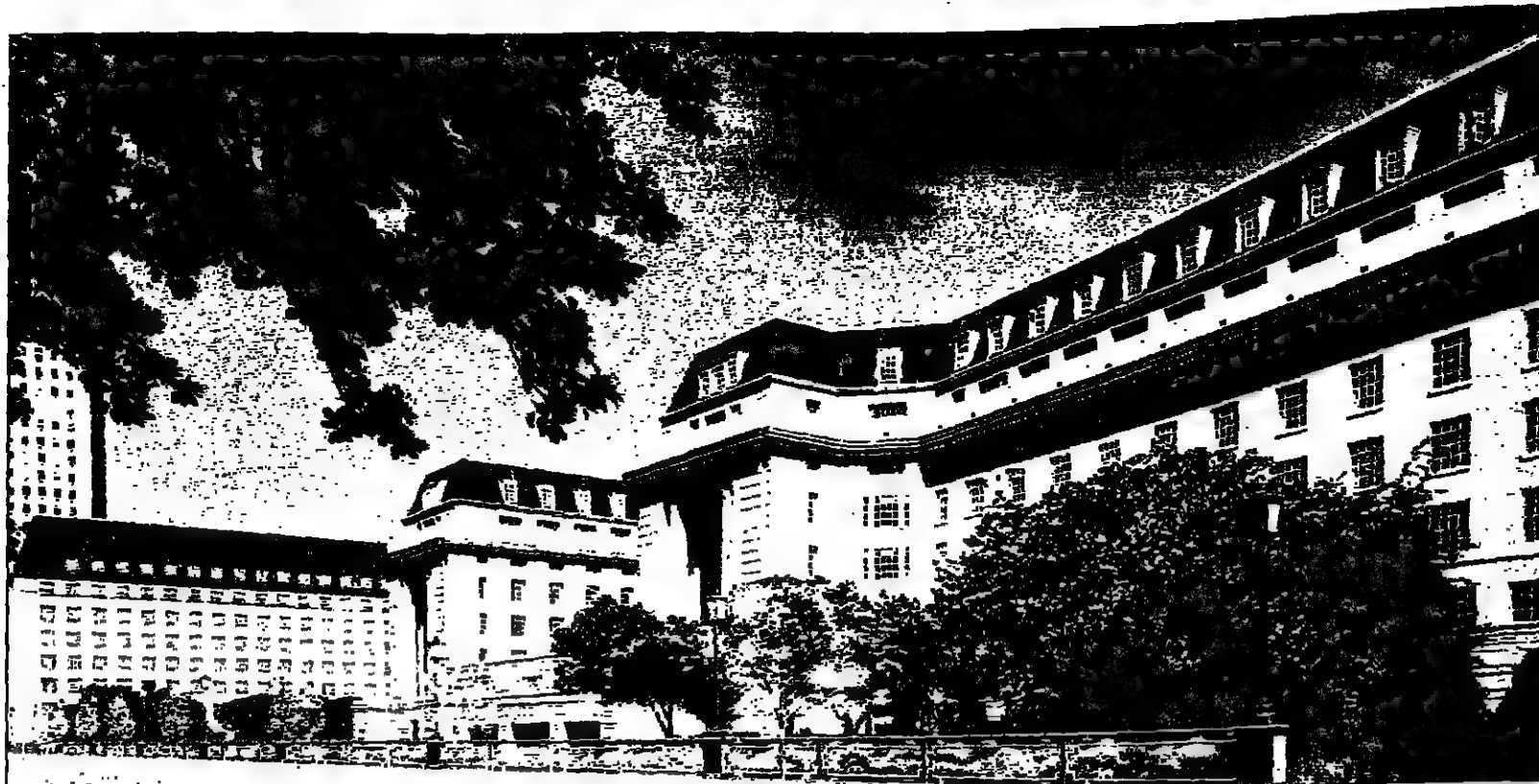
Quick seller: Georgian house in ten acres

and British expatriates. The one-bedroom flats cost from £99,000, the three bedrooms from £250,000. Their location is a vital selling point. In the centre of London, they are a short walk from Waterloo International terminal, which is about 180 minutes from Paris and 195 minutes from Brussels via the Channel Tunnel.

Allison Dean, of the developers Galliard Homes, says: "Around 30 per cent of buyers want the apartments as an investment to bring in rental income. The rest have plans

Newbury and Lewes areas are bucking the national trend of a depressed market. The agents recently sold a £1.25 million former rectory in an East Sussex village to a British businessman returning from the colony. The seven-bedroom Georgian property in Newick, set in ten acres near Haywards Heath, with swimming pool, tennis court and paddocks, sold within seven days for 25 per cent more than the original price.

A perfect location involves a rural setting with good transport, schools and shops. The



County Hall: the former headquarters of the Greater London Council. Apartments on offer there are selling well to foreign buyers

property should be in the £500,000 to £1 million bracket. Many buyers planning to retire or work from home are looking further afield than the Home Counties, as far as Scotland, for six to ten-bedroom country homes with land.

Recently, Knight, Frank and Rutley sold several large country-house properties in the £400,000-plus range in Scotland to expats.

Diarmid Mackenzie Smith of Knight, Frank and Rutley, says: "Many have roots in Scotland. After the fast life in Hong Kong, some want to live in a quieter part of the world. But rather than choosing a specific location, they are looking throughout the country for the house they want."

Carlton Clements, an architect and consultant who has worked abroad for 14 years, chose an 18th-century castle divided into ten separate homes in County Durham as his base. Within 20 miles of city of Durham and 30 miles of Newcastle, the five-bedroom property offered "the perfect

retreat" for holidays in England, good security (because other parts of the house were occupied) and the rural ambience he and his wife sought.

They are now based in England but are moving to be nearer their family, and so they are advertising their Durham castle in Hong Kong at £198,000.

Like the Simmons' four-

bedroom stone cottage in Devon, it is included in a December property exhibition in Hong Kong organised by *In The Sticks*, a British country-property newspaper. The exhibition will feature unusual properties including windmills, lighthouses, former rectories and wings of country mansions throughout rural Britain, from Orkney to Cornwall, the Republic of Ireland,

the Channel Islands and France, from as little as £30,000 for a remote croft house in the Western Isles to £500,000.

Jeremy Higgs, publisher of *In The Sticks*, says: "House-hunting is never easy, but when you are 6,000 miles away it can be even more difficult. At least by taking details of properties to buyers in Hong Kong, they can

narrow down their options for viewing when they come home at Christmas."

LYNNE GREENWOOD

Galliard Homes, County Hall sales office (0171-620 1500), Strutt & Parker, London (0171-620 7282); Hong Kong (00 852 2816 2532); Knight, Frank & Rutley, London (0171-629 8171); Scotland (0131-225 8171). In The Sticks, Carlisle, Cumbria (01434 38140).



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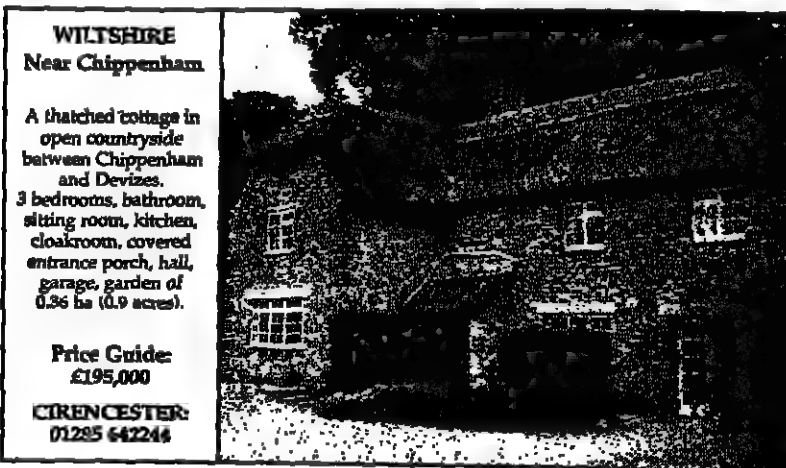
A refurbished late Victorian/Edwardian family house in a sylvan setting, fronting the open forest. 4 principal beds, 2 baths, 4 reception, etc. Cottage/annexe with 3 beds, bath, recep, kitchen. Outbuildings, mature grounds and paddock. About 1.04 ha (2.56 acres). LYMINGTON: 01590 677233



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Newtown Common

A secret cottage reached on foot with an imaginative and unusual garden. 2 beds, dressing rm, bath, study/hall, sitting rm, dining rm, kitchen, utility/shower rm, garden lobby, garden store and garden shed, garage, pretty gardens.

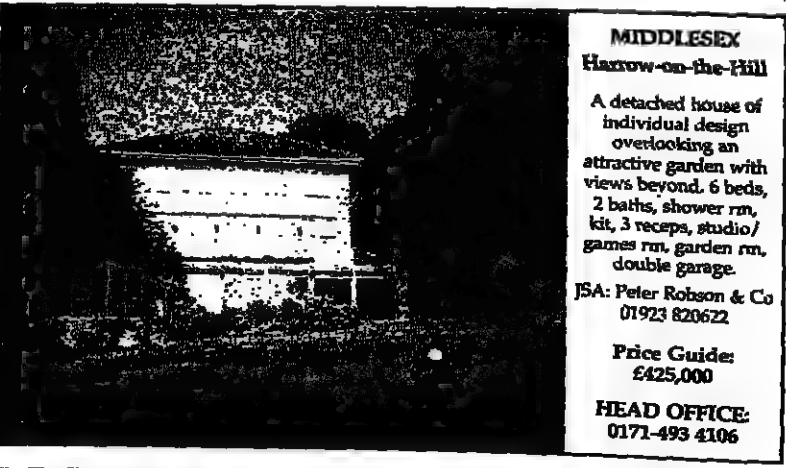
Price Guide:
£175,000
NEWBURY: 01635 523225



WILTSHIRE
Near Chippenham

A thatched cottage in open countryside between Chippenham and Devizes. 3 bedrooms, bathroom, sitting room, kitchen, cloakroom, covered entrance porch, hall, garage, garden of 0.56 ha (0.9 acres).

Price Guide:
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MIDDLESEX
Harrow-on-the-Hill

A detached house of individual design overlooking an attractive garden with views beyond. 6 beds, 2 baths, shower rm, kit, 3 reception, studio/games rm, garden rm, double garage.

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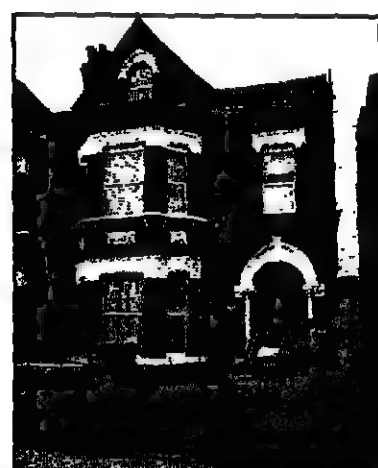
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FARNHAM: 01252 737115



FIMLICO, SW1 £490,000
In Sutherland St, a house currently providing a separate basement flat. 3 beds, dressing room, 2 baths, 1st flr mssg, dining room, kitchen, garden. Freehold. BELGRAVIA: 0171-730 9854



ST LEONARD'S TERR, SW3 £1,375,000
A well modernised house with a large secluded terrace and parking. 5 beds, dressing/shower rm, 4 baths, 3 reception, kitchen, comm gdn. Freehold. CHELSEA: 0171-352 1484



NICOSIA ROAD, SW18 £399,500
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PADDINGTON STREET, W1 £205,000 to £215,000
Four newly modernised 2 bed flats in a small block near Baker Street. JSA: York Estates 0171-724 0335. New 125 year leases. MAYFAIR: 0171-408 0155



SHARLESBURG ESTATE, SW11 £129,950
In good order, a charming Victorian Gothic style cottage in a Conservation Area. 2 beds, bath, recep, kitchen, pretty small garden. Freehold. BATTERSEA: 0171-228 0174



"HILLGATE VILLAGE", W8 £385,000
A light, well decorated Victorian house facing west. 3 bedrooms, bathroom, drawing room, dining room, study, kitchen, patio. Freehold. KENSINGTON: 0171-727 0705

سكنى من الامم

SHOPPING

11

Wrap up your gift-buying the easy way

Joseph Connolly's guide to buying presents under £50 on a gentle stroll from Jermyn Street to Bond Street

GENTLEMEN: would you like to take care of all your Christmas shopping for family and friends in one enjoyable day? Look no further. Here is the blueprint. We are strolling from Jermyn Street to Bond Street in quest of stylish gifts in the best shops (many offer free gift wrapping), but

they must cost less than £50. You don't have to spend a fortune but, if you are so inclined, most shops will oblige: so we will throw in a few out-of-this-world desirables for the sake of festive glitter.

At the Piccadilly end of Jermyn Street is T.M. Lewin &

Son. It has a magnificent range of silk ties and braces (both £29.50) decorated with stripes and spots, Gothic script or 1960s psychedelia. The ladies' shop next door has white cotton and lace nightdresses and gowns (£45 and £49.50) and a slinky, silk number in dusty pink, also £49.50.

Paxton & Whitfield is ideal for large wicker trays from £7.50 packed with your choice of cheese: £4.45 per lb for Stilton.

Floris is not just for fragrances, but for chic stocking fillers, such as fluted brass card cases (£10.95) and art deco-style atomisers and pewter bottles (both from £21).

Next door, James Bodenham is a treasure trove for the children: a soft reindeer with an Andy Capp nose (£14.25) and a £40 hedgehog boot brush attached to a pole.

From December 7, Hilditch & Key are offering shirts at £39.50, nightshirts at £49.95 and pure cashmere scarves in ten colours for £30. Solid-silver collar stiffeners are a nice touch, at £31.95. More luxury? For men, a heavy silk dressing gown (£495).

Sybarites should head for Czech & Speake for perfumed burning sticks (£17.50), fragrances and oils (from £17.50).

AT the Alfred Dunhill shop, I recommend the endlessly long ten-year-old Havanas, individually packed in a wooden box: £32 for the smoke of a lifetime. The gift of a lifetime might be one of Viscount Linley's large inlaid wooden boxes, each in the style of an architectural folly: £9,500 for an antique of the future.

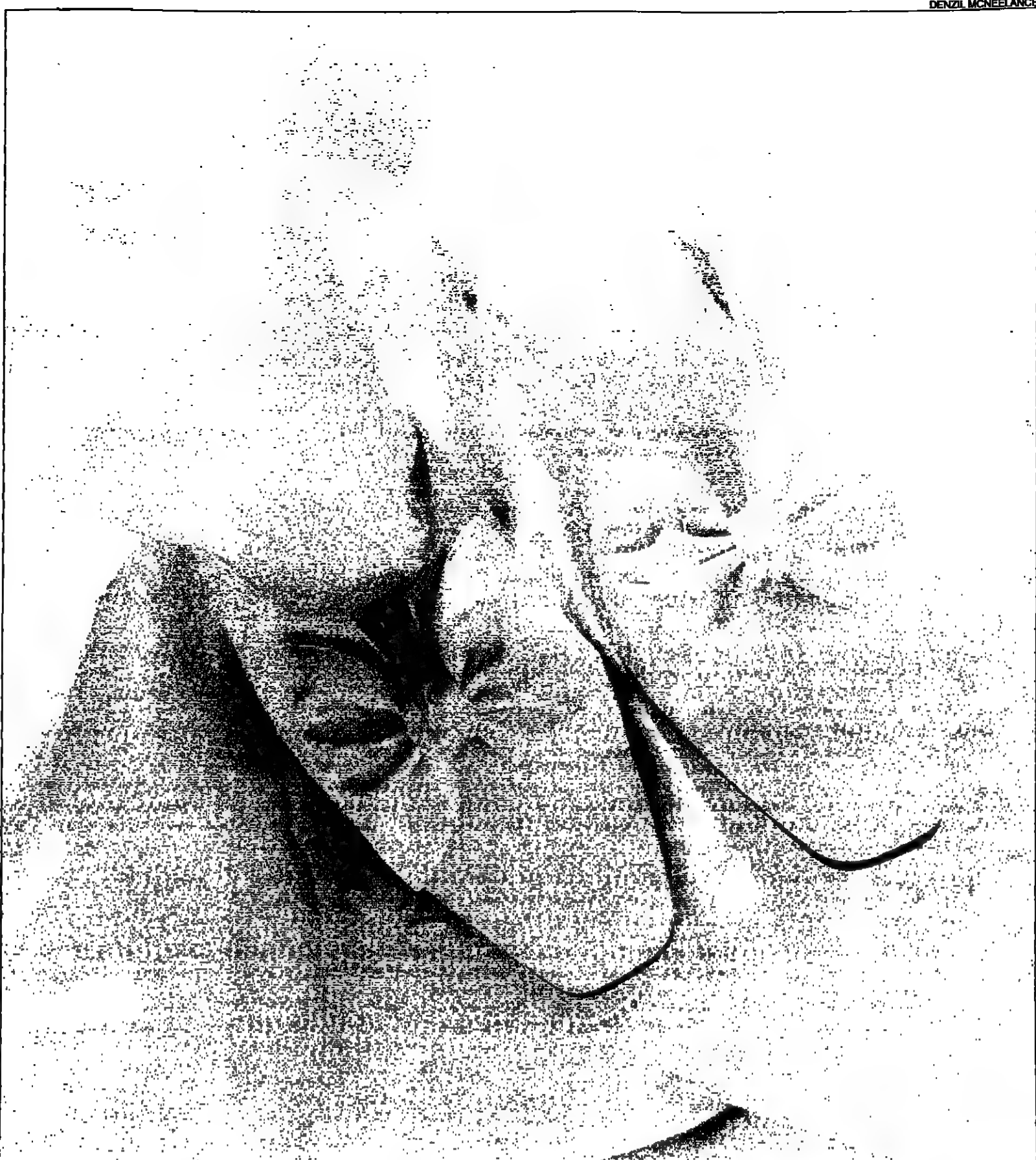
Fortnum & Mason has a wooden box containing half a bottle of pink champagne and a handful of truffles (£19.50). Beluga caviar is £45 for 28g (not much these days). Upstairs there are wooden hobby horses with furry heads (£43), big enough for a toddler, and little dollies in hampers (£29): it seems that Fortnum & Mason puts most things in hampers.

On to Burlington Arcade, and a calf Montblanc notebook cum wallet is £49. You could buy all seven of its beautifully bottled inks for £29.75.

Many women would love the wool jersey hand-printed gloves at Georgina von Ezdorf (£49); many more would love the midnight-blue velvet kimono, splattered with gold (£695).

Into Bond Street: feeling tired? Hungry? The Westbury Hotel around the corner in Conduit Street offers a two or three-course lunch (£15 or £22.50) in a relaxing atmosphere — but here is the twist: you can dump all your shopping bags in the hotel for an indefinite period. You can even pop back to add more.

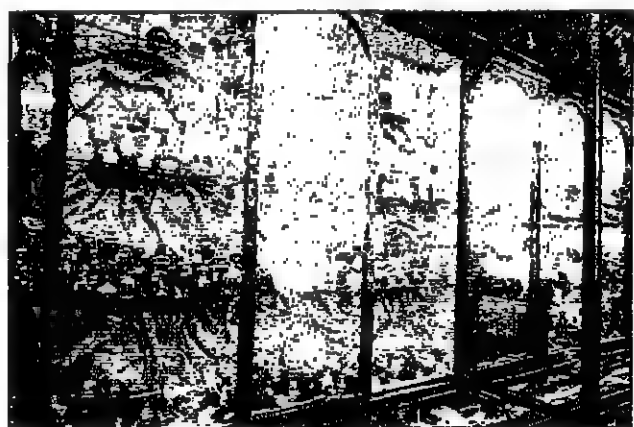
Charbonnel et Walker offers a circular box of the best chocolates (2lb for £45). You can also spell out a message for the person getting the gift with lettered choc — maybe, "This cost £45". Nearby is



Cotton satin slippers (£40) match lace-trimmed silk nightdresses (£1,430) — a sea of frothy luxury at The White House, New Bond Street



Hilditch & Key's heavy silk dressing gown costs £495. From December 7 the shop is selling shirts for £39.50



Floris's atomisers and art-deco scent bottles (from £21)



James Bodenham, a treasure trove for seasonal gifts



Bodenham's soft red-nose reindeer (£14.25)

Addresses

□ All the following numbers have the prefix 0171:
T.M. Lewin & Son, 106 Jermyn St (930 4201); Paxton & Whitfield, 93 Jermyn St (930 0259); Floris, 89 Jermyn St (930 2853); James Bodenham, 58 Jermyn St (930 5340); Hilditch & Key, 37 and 73 Jermyn St (930 5336); Czech & Speake, 30c Jermyn St (439 0216); Alfred Dunhill, 30 Duke St (499 9566); Fortnum & Mason, 81 Piccadilly (734 1040); Montblanc, 60-61 Burlington Arcade (493 6369); Georgina von Ezdorf, 50 Burlington Arcade (404 7789); Charbonnel et Walker, 28 Old Bond St (491 0939); Mikimoto, 179 New Bond St (629 5300); Hermès, 155 New Bond St (499 8850); Fogal, 36 New Bond St (493 0900); Smythson, 44 New Bond St (629 8536); The White House, 51 New Bond St (629 3521); Chappell, 50 New Bond St (491 2777); The Westbury, Conduit St (629 7753); two-course lunch £15, three-course £22.50. Claridges and The Causerie, Brook St (629 8860); supper 5.30pm-11.30pm at the Causerie. Two courses — smorgasbord followed by a hot main dish — £12 (lunch and supper prices exclude drinks and service).

CORRECTION

Thomas Goode's glass designer is Neil Wilkin, not Neil Wilkinson as stated in last Saturday's Weekend.

Give the joy of choosing



This year, give them the joy of choosing their own presents with National Garden Gift Tokens.

Easy to post, the colourful £1 to £20 tokens can be bought and exchanged for a huge variety of plants and other gardening items at most Garden Centres, Garden Shops and Nurseries right across the UK.

So give real joy this Christmas, give the gift that grows.

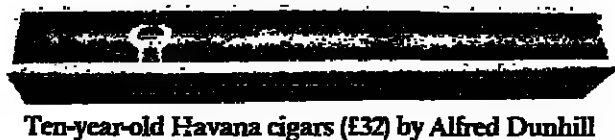


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Czech & Speake is one of the many shops that will gift-wrap Christmas presents free of charge



Ten-year-old Havana cigars (£32) by Alfred Dunhill

Creda's fan Ovens cut out the damn and blasts.



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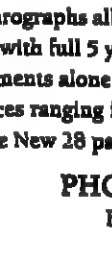


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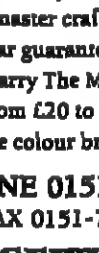
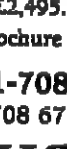
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TM2/11

Poetry Competition

£16000 prize money to be won

The International Society of Poets, an affiliate of the widely respected US National Library of Poetry is sponsoring an International Open Amateur Poetry Competition — with a total of 840 prizes to be awarded over the next twelve months. The closing date for entry is 31 December 1995. Another competition begins on 1 January 1996. The competition is open to all and entry is free.

Publication Opportunity

All of the poems entered into the competition will also be considered for inclusion in one of the Society's forthcoming anthologies. Every poem remains the exclusive property of its author. Anthologies published by the organisation have included *On the Threshold of a Dream*, *Days of Future's Past*, *Of Diamonds and Rust*, and *Moments More to Go*, among others.

"It's always exciting to discover new talent. We have been sponsoring competitions in the United States for more than ten years now - and it's a special pleasure to be running these events in the UK," stated Elizabeth Barnes, President of The International Society of Poets. "We're especially interested in receiving poems from new or unpublished poets."

How to Enter

Anyone may enter the competition simply by sending in one



The Coming of Dawn, featured above, is one of The National Library of Poetry's recent deluxe hardbound anthologies.

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Your poem should be no more than 20 lines, and your name and address must appear at the top of the page. Every poet who enters will receive an evaluation of their artistry by the judges within seven weeks.

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SHOPPING

13

Not to be shared with the angels

Go to Soho for the ideal stocking filler — with whiskies up to £6,250 a bottle



Whisky, Japanese-style

Jack Milroy is a bearded gentle giant of a Scotsman whose knowledge and experience of whisky is exceeded only by his brother Wallace — author of the *Malt Whisky Almanac*. Together they run Milroy's — a part of London's Soho scene for more than 30 years and stockists of nearly 350 different whiskies. Most of these are single malts from Scotland, although two dozen Irish whiskies are stocked (including the rare Old Comber at £100 a bottle), as well as a good American selection, and even a couple from Wales and Japan.

Japanese in London are highly unlikely to buy their own country's produce because they are among the greatest fans of rare and classic Scottish malts. Recently a businessman from Tokyo dropped in seeking something special to toast his daughter's engagement and settled on two bottles of 50-year-old MacAllan at £5,000 each.

The most expensive malt that Milroy's has in stock is a Glenfiddich — also 50 years old, and one of only 500 in existence — at £6,250. One reason why whisky of this age is so horribly expensive is that, by the time the bottling takes place, up to 75 per cent of the cask's contents has evaporated: this is referred to rather poetically as "the angel's share", although it has to be paid for by us mere mortals.

Milroy's catalogue is updated every few weeks, and bottles, or cases, can be dispatched anywhere in the world. A personal visit is recommended, however, because Jack Milroy is so concerned that customers find the malt that is right for them that he conducts a mini teach-in for each and every beginner, or for anyone wanting to branch out into the wonderful world of Lowland, Islay, Campbeltown and Mull, having exper-



imented with the more popular Highland (the best known of which is Glenmorangie) and Speyside (whose brand leader is Glenfiddich). Tastings are conducted standing around a barrel in the centre of the shop — as I discovered. First up was Auchentoshan (£22) — "Excellent for weaning people off the blends," says Jack. Blended whisky, such as Bells, Teachers and the Famous Grouse, accounts

for the lion's share of sales in this country but the malts are all a single distillation. "Softish and probably elegant," I wrote in my notes. Next was Craigellachie — 14 years old, 60 per cent alcohol and £35 a bottle. "It needs a drop of water," says Jack. "All malts do — like a rose needs dew." I wrote: "Slightly smoky." There were one or two more in similar vein. Then came Milroy's

own bottling of Springbank — 46 per cent alcohol ("the best strength" says Jack), 29 years old and £69 a bottle. I can't quote from my notes because by this point they had become totally incomprehensible but I do remember enjoying this Springbank so much that Jack insisted I have a touch more. The shop has just undergone its first refurbishment since it opened in 1964, and the ranked bottles look



splendid on their new deep shelves and (for the rarer stuff) behind glass. Downstairs is a crypt devoted to fine wine, including all the first growths since 1945, a stunning collection, and quite possibly one of the best in London. Jack Milroy is well known to the scores of local restaurant proprietors, and the intention is that they can now list a wine without actually stocking it — and then, once it has been ordered by the well-heeled diner, whizz round to Milroy's to pick it up.

Wine catalogues are also available, and soon the Milroys are to open a "whisky academy", where up to 100 whiskies can be tasted. At Milroy's you can even buy your own cask of whisky — a hoghead for £900 that will one day yield 300 bottles — or rather less once the angels have set to work.

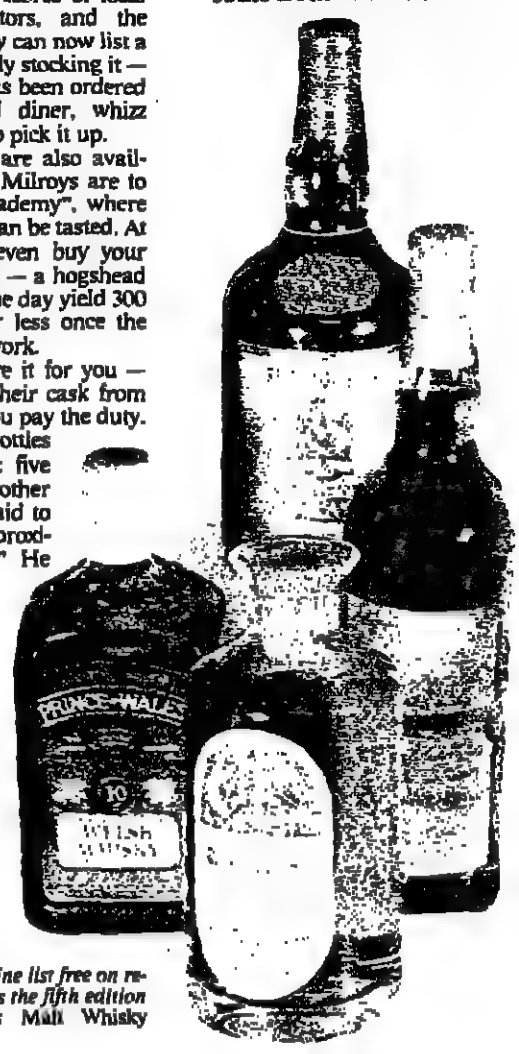
Milroy's will store it for you — many people visit their cask from time to time, and you pay the duty. Ten years on, 100 bottles may be drawn off: five years after that, another 100. "Milroy's," I said to Jack, "seems an approximation of heaven." He smiled.

"A touch more Springbank?" said Jack; I made my excuses and stayed.

JOSEPH CONNOLLY

Milroy's is at 3 Greek Street, Soho, London W1 0171-437 0893/2385/9311, fax 0171-437 1345 and is open from Monday to Friday 10am to 7pm, Saturday 10am to 6pm. Whisky and wine list free on request. Also available is the fifth edition of Wallace Milroy's Malt Whisky Almanac (£4.99).

Milroy's, a Soho fixture for more than 30 years, stocks nearly 350 different whiskies, mostly single malts, from Scotland, and Irish whiskies, as well as American, and even some from Wales, below



SHOPAROUND

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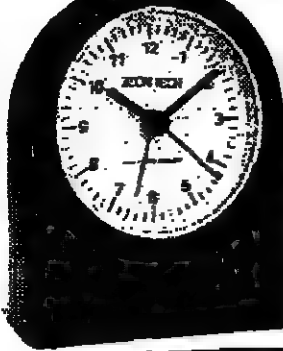
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Taylor made for a TV revival

DANGEROUS CALM: The Selected Stories of Elizabeth Taylor Edited by Lynn Knight Virago, £15.99

AFTER the rediscovery of Jane Austen via television, it is the turn of another truly English writer, Elizabeth Taylor. Virago has published a well chosen selection of her short stories.

Taylor's territory is mainly the middle-class home counties, but if this sounds low-key, the impression is deceptive. Under the ordered surface, repressed emotions fester. When they find expression, they frequently take the form of scandal. In *Summer Schools*, one of Taylor's most brilliantly pointed stories, respectable Ursula has a drunken one-night stand with a man whose vulgarity she despises. Her sister Melanie indulges a neurotic crush on a professor at a summer-school course. Their futile search for love only brings closer the future that threatens them, that of growing into two elderly spinster sisters.

A sense of unease runs through many of the stories, from the fraught embarrassment in *The Letter Writers* that afflicts a shy woman who, against her better judgment, agrees to lunch with the famous novelist she has been corresponding with for years, to the raw menace in *Husbands and Wives* that faces a woman alone in a country house when she intervenes in a scene of domestic violence.

Taylor's descriptions are visual gems. Of the manservant Silcox in *A Dedicated Man* she writes, "He was stately, eyes like a statue's, mouth like a carp's". The twist at the end of this story is perfect in its echoing possibilities.

Her observer's eye is no less keen when turned inward — unnervingly in what is probably her last story, *The Wrong Order*. Taylor, who died of cancer in 1975, records the effect of living with the dying in the mind of the fictional Tom, who sees Hilda gazing rapt at lilac blossom. "He remembered reading about Colette on her death-bed, her absorbed and heightened passion for the little things about her, and he wondered if he could stand much more of the same thing."

Taylor felt happiest with the short story but this collection should renew interest in her novels, five of which are being republished by Virago next week. Television producers, having mined the Austen seam, should take note.

CLARE COLVIN

Testing tome that tries men's souls

Nicholas Humphrey brings the gentle light of reason to bear on our superstitious nature, says Lynne Truss

content of unexplained phenomena, which, taken cumulatively, appear to attest to a supernatural. Is it such a big deal, for example, that a man can bend spoons? The feats of psychokinesis or extrasensory perception are always only remarkable for the mystery of their unconventional agency, not for their substance. They involve reading playing cards without seeing them, for ex-

SOUL SEARCHING: Human Nature and Supernatural Belief By Nicholas Humphrey Chatto, £18.99

ample, moving things without touching them, while the lights were off. "Nobody has ever been known to succeed by psychokinesis in stopping a charging bull or in creating a Leonardo painting."

This is an intelligent and highly readable book, which grinds its own axe quietly. Never does Humphrey suggest that people are gullible or stupid, only that a rather primitive instinct continues to resist — however feebly and illogically — the idea of a knowable universe. Humphrey quotes Alfred Lord Tennyson's *In Memoriam*: "I think we are not wholly

brain... Let Science prove we are, and then/What matters Science unto men?"

What may catch on from this book is Humphrey's variant on that old stand-by "the Argument by Design". His new coinage is "The Argument by Unwarranted Design", and it refers to the interesting constraints that surround most claims to psychic power, including (controversially) the miracles of Christ. Why can a horse add up only when its owner is present, wearing a particular hat? Why do messages from

beyond the grave arrive in such garbled form? Why do psychics conveniently have no control over their gift? "The arbitrariness of such constraints should alert us," Humphrey says.

The only factor missing from Humphrey's excellent argument is imagination, but then imagination is left out of all arguments these days, especially by theoretical psychologists. "Just what happens when the lights go out? Quite as much as spiritual need, imagination will grab at anything to fill that gap."

Neighbours in a town like malice

Penny Perick discovers a nest of poisonous gossip in west London

THE GOSSIPS is a chronicle of a world without love. It is set in Hillgate Village, a charming section of west London's Notting Hill, and depicts ugly existences going on inside pretty, pastel houses.

An object of particular interest to her poisonously nattering neighbours is Annie, whose nasty, self-deceiving husband, Henry, has had their marriage annulled and

THE GOSSIPS By Teresa Waugh Sinclair Stevenson, £12.99

ing, cracking up and losing her looks. Annie's problems are real enough. Her lover, Will, is a strutting foreign correspondent, hooked on danger zones. Tamsin is currently acting the part of the teenager from hell: skipping school, telling fibs and, although Annie does not know it, working a telephone sex-line.

The silver lining in Annie's clouded life is another neighbour, Walter, who, like her, is a wounded survivor of a failed marriage. He listens to Annie's troubles and, unlike the rest of his vicious circle, does not report them. It is a measure of the blinkered stupidity of Sarah and her ilk that their wild surmises are ludicrously inaccurate. At various times, they assume that Walter is gay, or that he is having an affair with Isabel, another neighbour, whose husband has recently committed suicide.

As viperish tongues wag, Waugh keeps up a spirited pace to reach a conclusion where everyone gets his or her just deserts. Her characterisation is merciless: she makes you shudder at Henry's odious religiosity, Sarah's psychopathic curiosity, and the small-mindedness of a wealthy but worthless community that survives on little-tale and Greek yogurt. *The Gossips* is more of a horror story than anything written by Stephen King.



Waugh: merciless eye

now has a new wife and baby. The natters toy with the idea that Henry may have abused Tamsin, his and Annie's troubled, 15-year-old daughter, a rumour that has disastrous consequences.

Most malicious of the neighbourhood gossips is Sarah. Her husband is often away, her sons are at boarding school and she has a lot of time to kill between gin and tonics. Bitterly dissatisfied with her empty days, her sole activity is meddling.

Even without Sarah spreading rumours that she is drink-



On the edge of extinction: with only 5,000 tigers left in the wild, the race is on to save the noblest of the big cats

Every cat should have its Day

FIGHT FOR THE TIGER By Michael Day Headline, £17.99

about his conversion from successful ad-man to buccaneering animal campaigner.

Naive at first, Day was soon put straight by the professionals of the Environmental Investigation Agency. The world's leading wildlife conservation groups had become complacent, and politicians just did not care. But the public would respond if the facts were put before them. With a reckless disregard

for his own safety, he became an eco-spy, gathering a damning dossier of evidence that would give the tiger one last chance. From Bangkok's shameful wildlife street markets the trail led to Hong Kong, mainland China and Taipei, in Taiwan, the tiger necropolis, where Day was offered all kinds of grisly relics — even dried human placentas collected from Chinese labour wards.

His television reports, captured on hidden cameras, exposed the horrors of the tiger-bone trade and forced

Chinese officials to admit that in 1994 they had deliberately deceived the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species by torching 1,100 lbs of fake tiger bones to underline China's commitment to banning the trade. The news went around the world, and America, one of the few countries to emerge with credit from this story, finally authorised limited trade sanctions against China and Taiwan.

Day's book is not only a nail-biting, true-life adventure it is also a savage indictment of the world's governments and official wildlife bodies, whose supine response to the tiger crisis has hastened the great beasts' slide to extinction.

BRIAN JACKMAN

Women in love and war

FORBIDDEN PLACES By Penny Vincenzi Orion, £9.99

PENNY VINCENTI'S *Forbidden Places* starts in the present day, but a mere five pages in we have flashed back to 1938. It is one of those spring days in England, when — as we have been primed to expect — a young man's fancy turns to romance. Dating, in both senses, is important here: this is a book about love and war. But the background of war is not incidental, nor is its function merely to place the characters chronologically.

War is crucial to this sort of women's writing, for at a time when women's lives were bound by what men deemed those lives should be, war changed it. The men went and women brought up to be dependent had no choice but to learn how to be independent. And then they learnt they liked it. War was the great emancipator, politically, sexually, sometimes socially; and this is what Vincenzi's novel is about.

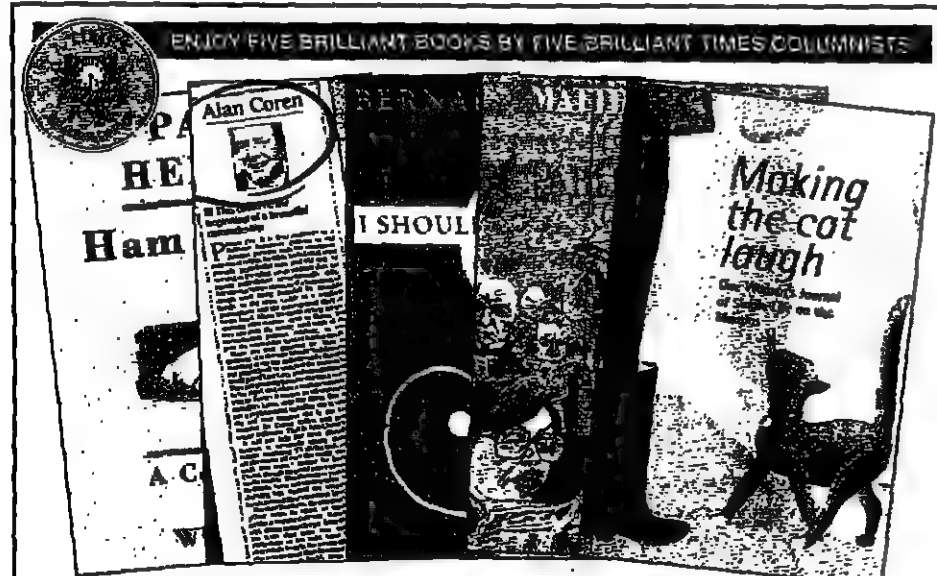
Three women, Grace, Clarissa and Florence, struggle to come to terms with their lives, which have been to some extent destroyed but also extraordinarily enlivened by the war. Grace and Florence are sisters-in-law, Clarissa was once engaged to Charles, Grace's husband, Florence's brother, so the fighting depicted takes place not just at the front but within the family. This is always a rich source of conflict, and Vincenzi is particularly good at the sower side of familial relations.

The forbidden places of the title are meant as well, one presumes, to indicate the illicit sexual entanglements that are rather neatly slotted into the book. The sex is of the melting, moaning variety: enough to thrill, supposedly, but not enough to shock.

Indeed, the whole point of this kind of writing is to be seductively readable, and it is strange how it is. Even as I did not think I found it particularly compelling, I carried on reading, late into the night.

One could not call it good writing, but it would not be fair to call it bad, either. What it is is story-telling — engaging, easy to read and entirely innocuous.

NIGELLA LAWSON



5 Books by Times writers

For readers who enjoy a good laugh or a quiet chuckle, who like to be challenged by writers with incisive views on anything and everything, *The Times* offers you the chance to buy five superb books by our renowned columnists.

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A Bit on the Side by Alan Coren. In his inimitably irreverent style, the Sage of Criddlewood lifts his eyes from the navel of the Universe to tackle crucial issues such as whether John Major can bring a lovely shine to those stubborn kitchen surfaces or where linoleum lies in the history of civilisation.

I Should Say So by Bernard Levin. It is true to say there is nothing this "sharpest, funniest, saddest" columnist cannot make interesting. His ever-curious mind can turn a single thought into a serious study of mankind. This book contains 60 plums of the fruits of more than 2,000 articles.

Ham & Pigs by Paul Hickey. Writer, broadcaster, television presenter and now organic farmer in Suffolk, the first animal he owned was a Large Black pig called Alice who provided the material and inspiration for this book. It begins with a simple quest: a search for the perfect bacon buffet. Funny, touching and informative, just like his weekly column.

Making the Cat Laugh by Lynne Truss. For seven years our principal television critic has

tried to make her cat laugh. *The Single Woman Stays at Home and Goes Quietly Mad* and other hilarious columns you have read in *The Times* made little impression on her feline friend. But they will make you smile.

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Life's a bitch, then you cry

WHAT is it about a well told animal story that can defy generation barriers? Something to do with the nature of pride, thought Eric Knight, creator of the original Lassie, whose aim was to bring dignity and honour to the relationship between man and dog. This month sees three new books about the loyal collie for different age groups — each a big hanky job.

At first glance, *Lassie* by Sheila Black (Puffin, £3.50) is hardly traditional Lassie. In this, Matt Turner is going the way of a city teenager — aimless, bratish and, more poignantly, dogless. But when his father loses his job and the family moves to rural Virginia, a stray collie transforms

CHILDREN

Matt's life, giving him — Lassie's providential role — something to be proud of. *Lassie Come Home* (Puffin Classics, £3.99), Eric Knight's original epic, was first published in 1940 and was set in a Yorkshire mining village of the 1930s. Here, a shattering blow is dealt to 12-year-old Joe when the family falls on hard times and Lassie is sold to a nobleman, who removes her to Scotland. Lassie's homecoming story, movingly told, is perfectly pitched to the 1990s, a time when we may share the sentiments of an earlier wildlife writer, Roderick Haig-Brown: "All the ills of

the human race can be traced to the fact that it has strayed too far from nature."

The harsher facts of nature which emerge in Knight's classic (absorbing for anyone over 12) have not deterred Rosemary Wells from devising a picture book for the under sevens. In *Lassie Come Home* (Harish Hamilton, £10.99) something odd happens to Lassie on her harrowing journey: she becomes "a modern legend of the triumph of love over the indecent power of poverty". This adds little to the intensity of the relationship between dog and boy, though there is magic in Susan Jeffers's illustrations.

MAUREEN OWEN

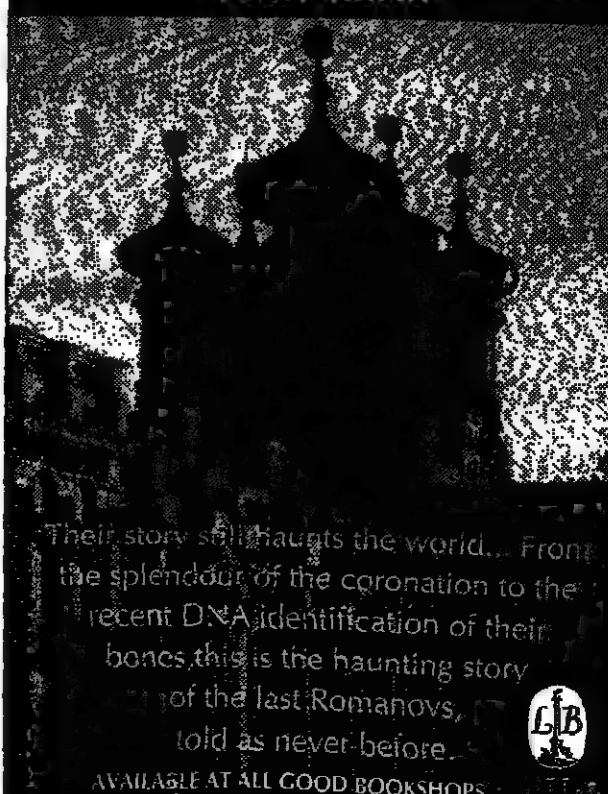
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2	IMMEDIATE ACTION Andy McNab (Bantam)	£15.99	2	3
3	MASKERADE Terry Pratchett (Collins)	£15.99	1	3
4	THE GHOST ROAD Pat Barker (Viking)	£15	0	1
5	X FILES BOOK OF THE UNEXPLAINED Vol 1 (Simon & Schuster)	£15.99	4	2
6	ENIGMA Robert Harris (Hutchinson)	£15.99	0	8
7	FROM POTTERS' FIELD Patricia Cornwell (Little Brown)	£15.99	5	7
8	THE LOST WORLD Michael Crichton (Century)	£14.99	7	4
9	THE MOOR'S LAST SIGH Salman Rushdie (Corgi)	£15.99	0	5
10	COME TO GRIEF Dick Francis (Michael Joseph)	£15.99	9	10

PAPERBACK				Last No. week weeks
1	INTERESTING TIMES Terry Pratchett (Corgi)	£4.99	1	2
2	THE LAST HUMAN Doug Naylor (Penguin)	£5.99	7	2
3	SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS David Guterson (Bloomsbury)	£5.99	4	9
4	PRIDE AND PREJUDICE Jane Austen (Penguin)	£1.99	6	4
5	LONG WALK TO FREEDOM Nelson Mandela (Little Brown)	£5.99	3	5
6	WRITING HOME Alan Bennett (Faber)	£7.99	5	6
7	REGENERATION Pat Barker (Penguin)	£5.99	0	1
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9	EYE IN THE DOOR Pat Barker (Penguin)	£5.99	0	1
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From stocking fillers to serious brain fodder, Giles Coren finds out how to be well-read this Christmas

All the very best from 1995

J.G. BALLARD

■ *The Language Instinct* by Stephen Pinker (Penguin, £8.99). "A brilliant book about the nature of language."
■ *Miss Smilla's Feeling For Snow* by Peter Høeg (Flamingo, £5.99). "This is a gripping murder mystery, and a meditation on the physics and poetry of ice. A remarkable piece of work."
■ *Junk Male* by Will Self (Bloomsbury, £9.99). "A fascinating collection of his reviews and articles, written in his characteristic high-octane prose."

GARY RHODES

■ *Delia Smith's Winter Collection* (BBC, £15.99). "The latest Delia is always a good bet. They are not just coffee-table books: they are great books on home-cooking."

GLENDIA JACKSON

■ *Miss Smilla's Feeling For Snow* by Peter Høeg (Flamingo, £5.99). "I never thought snow and ice could be so fascinating."
■ *Dile City Jam* by J.L. Burke (Phoenix, £5.99). "He is a wonderful writer, and in this series of novels about a policeman in Louisiana you not only get very involved in the detective story but you can smell the heat and rain."

BERYL BAINBRIDGE

■ *The Riddle of the Titanic* by Robin Gardiner and Dan Van der Vat (Weidenfeld & Nicholson, £20). "A rattling good read for anyone interested in the mystery of the Titanic."
■ *Colin Haycraft 1929-92*, *Maverick Publisher*, edited by Martin Stoddard (Duckworth, £14.95). "The last of the great publishers. This is for anyone who wants to know how good publishing used to be."

PAUL GAMBACCINI

■ *The Tortilla Curtain* by T. Coraghessan Boyle (Bloomsbury, £20). "A 1990s West Coast counterpart to *Bonfire of the Vanities*, and certainly as inclusive in its treatment of the problems of Los Angeles as



Paul Gambaccini

Tom Wolfe was of New York."
■ *The Sandman: Brief Lives* by Neil Gaiman (Titan Books, £12.50). "I would be happy to give the latest hard-cover edition of *Sandman* reprints to any thinking person for Christmas. The outstanding comic of the 1990s. In fact, the best fantasy writing of the decade."

TARIQ ALI

■ *Diana, The Goddess Who Hunts Alone* by Carlos Fuentes (Bloomsbury, £14.99). "This very unusual novel is a fictionalised account of the life of Jean Seberg. It is about what the FBI did to her and what she did to herself. It is about sexuality, politics and love, and is written with a very light touch."
■ *The First Man* by Albert Camus (Hamish Hamilton, £14.99). "I was surprised that I enjoyed this. Unfinished novels can be so awful. But this clearly autobiographical book is incredibly well-written: the descriptions of the Algerian landscape and of life under French colonial rule are stunning. It is one of his masterpieces."

MALCOLM BRADBURY

■ *F.R. Leavis: A Life in Criticism* by Ian McKillop (Allen Lane, £25). "Not brilliantly written but very important because it looks at one of our most influential literary



Someone to curl up with at Christmas: (from left) Graham Greene, Albert Camus, Salman Rushdie, Malcolm Muggeridge and Gore Vidal

critics in a way that for the first time shows his flaws as well as his strengths. It also clarifies the odd influence exerted by his wife, Queenie. A warts and all version of a great figure."

■ *Wonder Boys* by Michael Chabon (Fourth Estate, £15.99). "A very funny novel by a member of the American literary bratpack, about the encounter between a writer with a drug problem and his editor. It develops into a complex relationship as both their careers run into trouble. A book about literature going wrong."

KEN FOLLETT

■ *A Day in the Life: Music and Artistry of the Beatles* by Mark Hertsgaard (Macmillan, £16.99). "Tells the story of the writing and recording of each song, who is playing what on each track, and how the sound effects were done. If you are a bit of a Beatles fan, as I am, it is fascinating."

ROSIE BOYCOTT

■ *The Tortilla Curtain* by T. Coraghessan Boyle (Bloomsbury, £20). "English writers tend to write about faraway places, and faraway times, but we are sitting on a social tinderbox, and if Dickens were alive today he would be writing this sort of book."
■ *The Railway Man* by Eric Lomax (Cape, £15.99). "It makes you think differently about what people went through in the Second World War. I could never watch one of those jolly old films about POW camps in the same way again. A very brave book for an 83-year-old to write, and not very English."

■ *The Moor's Last Sigh* by Salman Rushdie (Cape, £15.99). "He is a great thinker and writer, and this book is so funny and wonderful that I have marked about 25 passages to come back to, which I will do again and again."

■ *Hidden Lives* by Margaret Forster (Viking, £16). "I enjoyed this very much, and not just because it is about our common town, Carlisle. She could have made this detailed comparison of the (relatively ordinary) lives of her mother, grandmother and herself into something arch or mundane, but instead it is compassionate and revealing about both social history and the strange magnetic field of the family."

JANCIS ROBINSON

■ *Always and Always* (John Murray, £19.99). "The most moving and evocative Second World War book I have ever encountered, which is odd as in some ways it is not about the war at all. It is a collection of 1939-45 letters written to

each other by Hugh and Margaret Williams: he was the actor-dramatist father of Simon and Hugo, she was the actress-model immortalised by Cole Porter in *You're the Top*. The war starts with him worrying about his career and her infidelity; by the end, two glamorous icons of the 1930s are older, sadder, wiser, but infinitely more human."

■ *The Amber Room* by Christopher Matthew (Sinclair Stevenson, £14.99). "The best thriller I have read this year. A deliberate throwback to the action adventures of the young Ian Fleming and Alistair Maclean, and none the worse for that."
■ *The Private World of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor* by Hugo Vickers (Harrods Publishing, £40). Moharunad Al Fayed's debut as a publisher is a breathtaking album of photographs discovered in neglected cupboards when he bought their house in Paris. Hugo Vickers added a suitably elegant and sometimes rightly acerbic text.

SARAH DUNANT

■ *Tomorrow is Another Country* by Allister Sparks (Heinemann, £7.99). "An insider's story of the tightrope negotiations that led to the fall of apartheid. Sparks is one of South Africa's most respected journalists and he clearly had access to everybody. This is a handbook for anyone who wants to know about South

confident novel that it is hard to believe it is her first. A huge book of interwoven stories about an ordinary family in York, it moves back and forth in time between the First World War and the present. It is enormously generous, very dramatic and very funny."

RACHEL CUSK

■ *Behind the Scenes at the Museum* by Kate Atkinson (Doubleday, £14.99). "An old story of twins and mistaken identity, but a great novel and very funny. The history of a family from the point of view of a strong line of women, who soldier on while the men fall, as well as a book about what being a twin does to your identity."

■ *The Unconsoled* by Kazuo Ishiguro (Faber, £15.99). "An extremely underrated book, and the future will testify to its importance. Easily the best I have read this year."
■ *As Luck Would Have It* by Samuel Lock (Cape, £9.99). "A hilarious book about a young gay man in Knightsbridge in the 1950s trying to sort his life out. The narrator is very intrusive and keeps addressing the reader all the way through, which is such a good device and rather neglected."

JULIA NEUBERGER

■ *Konin* by Theo Richmond (Cape, £18.99). "A loving and imaginative reconstruction of a destroyed Jewish community."
■ *Paula* by Isabel Allende (Flamingo, £14.99). "A touching farewell to a daughter, through a mother's life story."
■ *Henry James' Midnight Song* by Carol de Chellis Hill (W. W. Norton, \$11). "This was certainly the most amusing book I read all year, a literary and psychological romp through Vienna at the turn of the century. Brilliant."



Sarah Dunant

African politics. It is also terribly exciting, and at times so dramatic that it reads more like fiction than fact."

LORD BLAKE

■ *Gladstone* by Roy Jenkins (Macmillan, £20). "The first really good, full biography since Morley's life in three volumes. A work of high scholarship and very well written, it offers an extremely revealing picture of Gladstone."

■ *Historians I Have Known* by A. L. Rowse (Duckworth, £18.95). "This is a very amusing series of thumbnail sketches of historians — fortunately I am not one of them — which is critical but not as waspish as Rowse can be in private. It is very generous and very readable."

HILARY MANTEL

■ *The Paperboy* by Pete Dexter (Viking, £15). "Pete Dexter writes very tightly and very intelligently. This novel, about a young journalist sucked into the case of a psychopathic monster on Death Row, really makes you turn the pages, and yet at the same time is layered, and very witty."
■ *Behind the Scenes at the Museum* by Kate Atkinson (Doubleday, £14.99). "Such a

about a fascinating and sometimes brilliant character, made all the more enjoyable for me because his wife, Kitty, was a distant relative."
■ *Great Parliamentary Scandals* by Matthew Parris (Robson, £16.95). "A riotous read which reminds you that some of the most flawed men are also some of the greatest."

TERRY WAITE

■ *Penguin Portrait: Allen Lane and the Penguin Editors, 1935-1970*, edited by Steve Hare (Penguin, £12). "This is



Terry Waite

an excellent book for anyone who has read a few Penguin books over the years. Which, I suppose, is everybody."

■ *United States Essays 1952-92* by Gore Vidal (Abacus, £12.99). "I don't always agree with Vidal's opinions — he is an outrageous man in many ways — but he has an attractive, intelligent way of presenting those opinions, and a marvellous humorous ability."

■ *Graham Greene: The Man Within* by Michael Sheldon (Mandarin, £7.99). "This is a beautifully written and constructed biography of Graham Greene, in the modern

LORD JENKINS

■ *Enigma* by Robert Harris (Hutchinson, £15.99). "This novel has held sway with me for several months."
■ *Casting Off* by Elizabeth Jane Howard (Macmillan, £15.99). "A recent addition to my pick of the year, this makes a quartet of Howard's Cazalet saga."

■ *The Birth, Life and Death of the Social Democratic Party* by Ivor Crewe and Anthony King (OUP, £25). "This, for me at least, is even more compelling than it is poignant."

MICHAEL DOBBS

■ *Muggeridge* by Richard Ingrams (HarperCollins, £18). "An excellently written book

FRANCES FYFIELD

■ *So Little Done* by Theodore Dalrymple (Deutsch, £8.99). "This is a very enjoyable moral-philosophical book, albeit with a strong plot, about a humdrum serial-killer. It is told from prison, in the first person, by a man who, while working in the local authority housing department, has murdered 22 people on the waiting list. He uses philosophy to try to justify his crimes and challenges conventional morality, as well as being very witty."

■ *Driving My Father* by Susan Wicks (Faber, £9.99). "Half memoir, half novel, this is a lovely but unsentimental book about love and devotion and generosity. The narrator cares for her dying father and remembers how happy the family was in her youth. A nice change from all the fiction that focuses on dysfunctional families nowadays."

BRIAN MACARTHUR

■ *I FINISHED Casting Off* (Macmillan, £15.99), the fourth and final volume of Elizabeth Jane Howard's superbly crafted Cazalet Chronicle with a real sense

THE TIMES CRITICS' CHOICE

DERWENT MAY

ALBERT CAMUS'S novel *The First Man* (Hamish Hamilton, £14.99), published 35 years after his death is practically an autobiography. It described the haunting mixture of barrenness and joy in his poor Algerian childhood with extraordinary sensuous force. D.J. Enright's "kind of commonplace book", *Interplay* (OUP, £16.99), wove teasing thoughts around fascinating quotations.

LIBBY PURVES

ROSIE THOMAS'S *A Simple Life* (Heinemann, £12.99) hums with wisdom and a fine Grand Guignol plot in which a mother kidnaps her long-lost Down's syndrome daughter. Strangely escapist. Otherwise, I am rapt by Amyr Klink's *Between Two Poles* (Bloomsbury, £16.99), the testament of a voyage from the South to North Poles by a poetic Brazilian singlehander inspired by penguins.

PENNY PERRICK

ANNE SCOTT-JAMES'S *Gardening Letters to my Daughter* (Michael Joseph, £12.99) went into a new edition this year. It makes your fingers long to curl around a trowel.

Lives of the Great Songs, edited by Tim De Lisle (Penguin, £6.99) is a piece of musical sleuthing that will fascinate anyone whose ever hummed along to Frankie or Ella.

PETER STOTHARD

MUCH of my youth was spent on Latin and Greek: so some of my middle age is spent wondering whether that youth was wasted. To read *The Oxford Book of Classical Verse in Translation* (OUP, £19.99), where Hadrian's dying address to his soul (*animula vagula blandula*) is rendered by Donne, Byron and Stevie Smith, was enough to reassure this doubting anglo-classicist for another year.

So too *Penguin Modern Poets* (Penguin, £5). James Fenton is our finest poet of today and his *Out of Danger* is just one of many pieces which pull together the centuries.

Best book of the year was Salman Rushdie's *The Moor's Last Sigh* (Jonathan Cape, £15.99) on which *The Times* has already said enough: shame on the Booker judges.

ELIZABETH BUCHAN

GERMAINE GREER had me up to the small hours with her *Slip-Shod Stylys* (Viking, £20), a showcase for a dazzling intellect and gritty courage.

Pat Barker's *The Ghost Road* (Viking, £15) challenges, appals, haunts and makes astonishing connections in an evocation of the First World War that will not easily be matched. A worthy Booker winner.

BRIAN MACARTHUR

■ *I FINISHED Casting Off* (Macmillan, £15.99), the fourth and final volume of Elizabeth Jane Howard's superbly crafted Cazalet Chronicle with a real sense

of sorrow that the story is over. Also strongly recommended are David Guterson's slow-burning *Snow Falling on Cedars* (Bloomsbury, £5.99) and Robert Harris's *Enigma* (Hutchinson, £15.99).

MARY LOUDON

CHANG-RAE LEE'S *Native Speaker* (Granta, £9.99) is a stunning thriller cum love story. Highly original.

Behind the Scenes at the Museum by Kate Atkinson (Doubleday, £14.99) is a passionate exploration of family life. Written with enormous panache and wickedly funny, it will make you cry too.

DANIEL JOHNSON

DONALD PRATER'S *Thomas Mann: A Life* (OUP, £20) is the most incisive biography I have read this year.

Penelope Fitzgerald's *The Blue Flower* (Flamingo, £14.99) transports us to a remote and unfamiliar past (German Romanticism) with great sensitivity. *The Dreamer of Dreams* by Sean French (Granta, £13.99), by contrast, is an ultra-realistic novel about escapism: it is also very funny.

Hannah Arendt, Martin Heidegger by Elzbieta Esminger (Yale, £10.95) is more improbable than any novel, devastating to both reputations, and quite mesmerising.

CHRISTINA KONING

I FOUND *Promised Lands* (Faber & Faber, £14.99). Jane Rogers's novel about the settlement of New South Wales in the 1780s, most compelling.

I also enjoyed *Uses and Abuses* (Faber & Faber, £8.99). Aldo Busi's scabrous and irreverent account of his travels in Europe and Latin America.

GILL HORNBY

ANNE TYLER was back on cracking form again, with *Ladder of Years* (Chatto & Windus, £14.99) — funny and sad as ever, with an added, healthy dose of uncharacteristic cynicism.

Giles Smith's wonderful *Lost in Music* (Picador, £12.99) is about his life in pop, as fan and performer, and you can only giggle and hum along.

MARCEL BERLINS

ELMORE LEONARD'S *Riding the Rap* (Viking, £15) is a portrait of lowlife, small-time America that shows him to be the most skilful purveyor of authentic dialogue in the business. Lawrence Block's *The Burglar who Traded Ted Williams* (No Exit, £5.99) is dryly witty, hip and warm.

PETER MILLAR

AN ELEGANTLY crafted historical thriller, Robert Harris's *Enigma* intertwines romance and espionage with the secret of one of the Second World War's darkest horror stories.

Back in the 1990s, Philip Kerr's *Gridiron* (Chatto & Windus, £14.99) is a high-tech version of Agatha Christie's *Ten Little Indians*, set in a sentient skyscraper gone off its trolley.

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THE LOST WORLD OF
ALEXANDER
Peter Kersh

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16

RECORDINGS

NEW ON CD: Prokofiev wrestles with an angel; Brendel goes after Trout; the Beatles empty the vault

OPERA

John Higgins

■ PROKOFIEV

The Fiery Angel
Gorchakova/Leiferkus/Kirov
Orchestra/Gergiev
Philips 446 079-2 (2 CDs)***
Also on video, Philips
PAL 070 198-3

THIS WAS the unlikely opera in which Galina Gorchakova showed Britain that she was a future international star, first at the Proms in 1991 and then the next year at Covent Garden. Prokofiev's uneven work of obsession and exorcism in medieval Cologne had not been seen at the Opera



Gorchakova: hard to beat

House before; nor has anyone risked reviving it since. But David Freeman's staging was a co-production with the Kirov and that house provides Philips's live recording.

A few years are likely to pass before anyone comes along to rival Gorchakova's Renata, who begins as a frightened, half-mad woman recalling her childhood obsession with "the fiery angel," Prokofiev pitches his distraught heroine straight into a 15-minute narrative about the angel, a golden-haired youth who may or may not live only in Renata's imagination. With the help of her admirer, Ruprecht, she sets off to find him and ends up in a nunnery before being condemned to the stake for consorting with devils and demons.

At times Prokofiev, who provided his own libretto from Bryusov's symbolist novel, strays right up to the edge of hokum. It takes all the considerable combined strengths of Gorchakova and the orchestra, with Valery Gergiev un-

derlining all the violence in the score, to haul him back from the brink. But rescue him they do, with much help from Sergei Leiferkus's Ruprecht, a down-to-earth knight all at sea in a world of sorcery.

As light relief, Prokofiev introduces that improbable comic knockabout pair, Faust and Mephistopheles. Konstantin Pluzhnikov is especially effective as Old Nick, who eats a serving boy instead of the mutton which is a bit slow in arriving.

The opera fades in the final nunnery act. It is not helped by a feeble Inquisitor from Vladimir Ognovenko, the one weak link in the cast. Here it is well worth turning to Brian Large's excellent video, where the jock-strapped spectres who have haunted Renata throughout the opera eventually couple with naked ladies. Such things would never have been permitted when St Petersburg was Leningrad.

ORCHESTRAL

Barry Millington

■ MACCUNN

Land of the Mountain and Flood; Jeanie Deans (excerpts), etc
BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra/Brabbins
Hyperion CDA66815***

■ PARRY
Piano Concerto in F Sharp
STANFORD
Piano Concerto No 1 in G
Lane/BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra/Brabbins
Hyperion CDA66820***

HERE are two more splendid recordings from the ever-imaginative Hyperion label, both featuring little-known music in performances by the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under Martyn Brabbins. Hamish MacCunn was a Scottish composer (1868-1916), highly regarded in his time as a conductor and teacher. He is now remembered only for the concert overture *Land of the Mountain and Flood*, composed at the age of 18. Like the two ballades also recorded here—*The Dowry Dens o' Yarrow* and *The Ship o' the Fiend*—it conjures the brooding atmosphere of the glens with a strongly individual voice.

NEW ON VIDEO: Raving royal, Pfeiffer's false start, bringing home the Bacon, and a street-fighting Kylie

■ THE MADNESS OF KING GEORGE

Columbia TriStar, PG, 1994

NIGEL HAWTHORNE reigns supreme as George III, racked with mental, physical and political agonies in the film version of Alan Bennett's play. Nicholas Hytner, the original stage director, makes the most of cinema's opportunities for period display and location shooting, and the camera pulls you into the king's plight. Excellent support from Helen Mirren as the devoted Queen Charlotte; Rupert Everett as the fat and famous Prince of Wales; and Ian Holm as the maverick doctor who temporarily eases the king's torment. Available to rent.

■ THE AMERICAN SOLDIER

Cinecitt, 15, 1970

AN EARLY example of Rainer Werner Fassbinder's talent for taking movie clichés and twisting them into something personal. The hero is a Vietnam combatant of German descent, played by Karl Scheydt, who returns from duty and puts his killing skills to work in the Munich underworld. Costumes, props and gestures are drawn from Hollywood gangster movies; but the film's cynicism and black humour create a bizarre and fascinating parallel universe.

■ FALLING IN LOVE AGAIN

Arrow, 12, 1979

"INTRODUCING Michelle Pfeiffer as Sue Wellington." Well, we all have to start somewhere, although it is hard to detect Pfeiffer's later excellence in this awfully contrived piece of fluff about a Bronx youth's 1940s courtship of a WASP goddess with long hair, unfattering dresses and upper-class vowels. Matters are not helped by the contemporary frame put around the story: the boy grows up to be Elliott Gould, and Pfeiffer matures into Susanah York. Directed, produced and co-written by 20-year-old Steven Paul, a man not afraid of overstretching himself.

Even more welcome are the latest instalment in Hyperion's excellent "Romantic Piano Concerto" series. The Parry, in the exotic key of F sharp major, had not been heard for a century until the scholar Jeremy Dibble was commissioned last year by the Lloyd's Music Foundation to prepare a performing edition. Lloyd's then brought about a private performance (on two pianos), and the first public performance in modern times was on Radio 3's series *Fairest Isle*. Having heard the work a number of times over the past

18 months, I find myself increasingly drawn to it, especially the contemplative slow movement. But the Stanford (also previously unpublished and edited for this recording by Dibble) is perhaps even more attractive, with its constant melodic invention and resourceful structure. These two works, rescued from undeserved oblivion, are well served by Piers Lane's assured performances.

CHAMBER

Hilary Finch

■ SCHUBERT

Trout Quintet
MOZART
Piano Quartet
Brendel/Zehetmair/
Zimmermann, etc
Philips 446 001-2**

ON ONE of the surprisingly few recordings to twin Schubert's *Trout Quintet* with Mozart's C minor Piano Quartet, Alfred Brendel is joined by a cunningly chosen line-up of younger colleagues for what is doubtless a welcome bout of chamber-music making.

It is good to hear Brendel in collaborative mode, though the violin of Thomas Zehetmair is one of the main delights here. The players move into a sleepy backwater for the central movement, and



Brendel: collaborative

the *Trout* itself basks in languid autumnal light until the hunt is up, when each barbed phrase tells.

For the Mozart Piano Quartet, Zehetmair, together with Tabea Zimmermann on viola and Richard Duren on cello, provide a firm yet supple ensemble for Brendel in the outer movements (his playing here is reminiscent of his early Mozart concerto performances) and strong impetus for a sturdy central *Andante*.

POP ALBUM

David Sinclair

■ THE BEATLES

Anthology 1
Apple/EMI 8 34445 (2 CDs)**
AFTER the intoxicating hype surrounding the opening track, *Free as a Bird*, comes the sobering reality of a two-hour dig through another raft of substandard recordings and snippets of speech, similar to last year's immensely successful *Live at the BBC*.

Some of it is virtually unlistenable, and most superfluous to the great body of Beatles work that already exists. But rock archivists and

Majestic mania: Nigel Hawthorne gives an electrifying performance as the king in Nicholas Hytner's *The Madness of King George*

■ FRANCIS BACON

Phaedon Video, E, 1985

JOIN Francis Bacon and Melvyn Bragg for lunch as they chew over the painter's artistic philosophy. Wade through the photos and clippings on Bacon's studio floor and tour the Tate Gallery's 1985 Bacon retrospective. This is a particularly fascinating documentary profile. Others in Phaedon's latest batch of releases include studies of Roy

Lichtenstein, Annie Leibovitz and Hockney's photographic collages of the 1980s.

■ RICHIE RICH

Warner, PG, 1994

NOT a film to win Macaulay Culkin new friends: as the cosseted son of billionaire parents, he mugs his way through this strenuous comedy inspired by comic-book characters. In the course of the plot, he learns the

value of friendship with impoverished kids: hard to square this with the Culkin money-making machine, or the film's dull, expensive trappings. Available to rent.

■ STREET FIGHTER

20:20 Vision, 12, 1994

CHARACTERS in a video game do not necessarily make good live-action figures, and all the furious action in the world cannot kick this

movie spin-off into life. It has its compensations, though: such as Jean-Claude Van Damme as a dashing UN-type troop commander; and Kylie Minogue as his right-hand girl, getting her lips round thankful dialogue. Raul Julia wastes his fading energies as a mad general out to conquer the world. A rental release.

GEOFF BROWN



The Beatles: dusty vaults

Beatles completists will spend hours poring over the scrupulously annotated sleeve notes and pondering the dubious merits of numerous rare demos, alternative takes and live recordings retrieved from some very dusty vaults.

POP SINGLE

David Sinclair

■ PUSHERMAN

First Time
Ignition IGN C5CD-E**
PUSHERMAN pull off the neat trick of incorporating the

crude, bluesy tones of slide guitar and harmonica into a sound that is unsettlingly strange and modern on their debut single. Screechy guitars, druggy lyrics and a palpably wasted aura lend a feeling of lazy immensity.

JAZZ

Clive Davis

■ URI CAINE

Toys

JMT 514022-2***

POST-BOP piano is often all velocity and no feeling: listening to several albums in one sitting can be as enervating as watching an ultra-competent typist impassively hammering out 500 words a minute. Uri Caine, a New York musician who visited London in the company of Annie Ross not so long ago, can detonate the pyrotechnics when the mood takes him, yet there is much more to his music than mere muscle and surface dexterity.

When he was accompanying Ross, Caine impressed

with his idiosyncratic sense of time, his angular phrasing and his aversion to clichés. The compositions on this album are much spikier and unyielding, but underneath lurks the same thoughtful sensibility, the same gift for the unexpected turn of phrase.

Don Alias's restless percussion immediately brings a fresh dynamic to the band's performances, and Caine's careful juggling of the instrumentation keeps staleness at bay. Trombone, trumpet and Gary Thomas's tenor saxophone are used sparingly, and on *Canteloupe Island* (one of two outstanding Herbie Hancock numbers, along with the title tune) Caine indulges in a funky duet with the wayward clarinetist Don Byron, whose contribution is unusually disciplined. Bassist Dave Holland and Ralph Peterson provide a reassuring presence whenever the soloists seem about to stray too far.

★ Worth hearing
★★ Worth considering
★★★ Worth buying

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See signposts local and A40 Oxford-Burford

Tel: 01993 772602

Event takes place only December 2-3 11am-4pm

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Visit the 800 year old undercroft (crypt) in the Priory, which is decorated for Christmas. Then watch a tree dressing festival in the 100 year old pear orchard (Cheshire Orchards Project) where local groups decorate trees and then perform an open air programme (ultimately by lantern light).

Passport holders are entitled to two for one admission

Tudor Road, Manor Park. Tel: 01928 569 895

Priory open noon-4pm

Tree dressing starts at noon

Event takes place only on December 3

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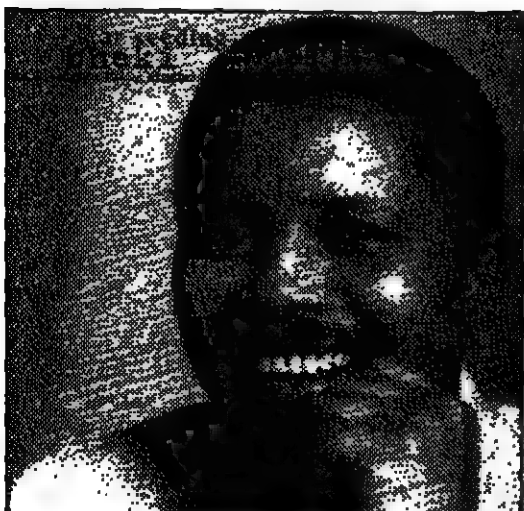
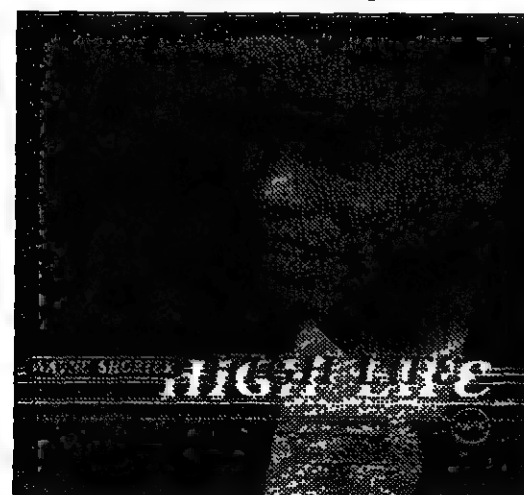
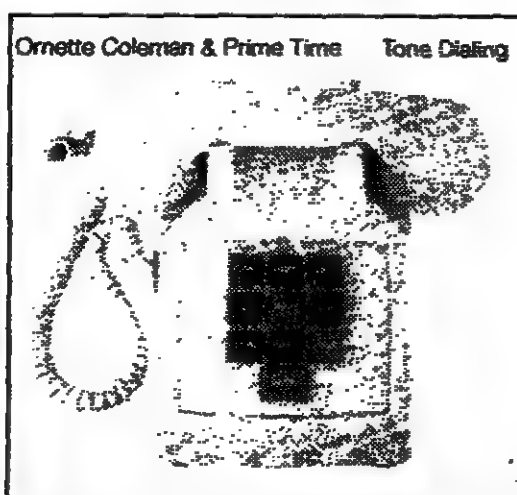
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TRAVEL

17

SKIING: Doug Sager finds a resort that persuades him of the joys of short breaks in the snow

Off piste for a wild weekend

Weekend skiing can be the worst of all possible worlds. A four-day fling for the price of a week's holiday, a fervid flight to the airport during the evening rush hour to get away, a panic after a full day's skiing to make the last flight back on Monday, and feeling like a zombie in the office for the rest of the week.

That is a not untypical view of weekend skiing from the uninitiated, and a not entirely inaccurate one from the adept. Weekend skiing is bad economics: flights are an absolute cost, whether amortised over four days or a fortnight, and scheduled flights cost more than Saturday charters. Personally, I'd

always considered weekend skiing rather in bad taste, too; the last flight of the yuppie, as it were.

Peter Matza, a veteran of six years' weekending with FlexiSki in Courchevel and Flaine in France, and Wengen in Switzerland, does not agree. "I can't deny that the absolute cost is there," he says, "but the rationale is being able to leave your office, arrive five hours later in the Alps and take off skiing first thing the next morning."

Mr Matza fits the weekender profile perfectly. He's a 36-year-old City financial officer, and he supplements annual ski holidays of a week or two with a four-day weekend early in January and another, in these years of excellent

spring snow, around Easter. "For me," he explains, "a weekend is as good as a week. Whatever rut you're in at the office, you get an instant shock because of the sudden change of environment."

Another weekend veteran, and serious off-piste skier, Roddy McKean, a London lawyer, relies on his four or five short breaks in the Alps, as "a way of getting in extra skiing without using my limited holiday time."

As a form of therapy, weekend skiing might work out comparatively inexpensive. There is no denying that weekenders ski and party at an accelerated pace, particularly the corporate and incentive groups which, for tour operators, are by far the most lucrative segment of the winter holiday business.

According to Britain's two leading weekend specialists, Ski Weekend and FlexiSki, clients fit into a distinct market profile. They typically take two to five "weekend" holidays, of an average four days each. They are generally professional people — almost as many women as men — who have more money than time. In fact, weekend firms report a noticeable increase in skiers of both sexes travelling on their own among the core client population aged between 25 and 45. A FlexiSki four-day weekend, with hotel, costs between £570 and £1,090, including flights.

The weekend ski business seems a good one to be in. During a year in which mainstream operators report drastically reduced bookings to Switzerland, FlexiSki is booked out from January to March in Verbier, the Swiss resort with the most expensive lift passes in Europe.

In France, Ski Weekend reports from its base in Chamonix a continued growth of 30 per cent a year, and 75 per cent of weekenders return for more. And in Courchevel, FlexiSki has just announced its acquisition of Lodge Nougat, the former luxury hotel that is probably the best-appointed British-owned hostelry in the Alps.



La Grave: the danger of skiing there has been well-publicised, but it has hardly deterred enthusiasts

It has, incidentally, been renamed The Lodge.

I booked in last winter for three days of skiing the manicured slopes of the Trois Vallées. FlexiSki gives clients entry to Russian evenings at La Bergerie. The shows, with dancing girls and gallon jugs of vodka, earn rave reviews from the bankers and medical men who make up its corporate clientele, bringing in 80 per cent of FlexiSki's revenues.

But even as an ordinary client, accompanied by FlexiSki personnel, I noticed that the welcome from Courchevel's elegant Bellecôte dining room was much warmer than that dished out to the average British package tourist, who is not always politely received by the French in the Trois Vallées.

FlexiSki can lay on jet flights from London City Airport direct to

the airport in Courchevel, or to Lyons for a two-hour transfer. It can also arrange a weekend to Verbier only a few hours before the final Thursday-evening flight to Geneva. There is flexibility for day trips and long-haul, ten-day "double weekend" holidays centres on scheduled flights, lightning transfers and instant access to resort hotel rooms, which are often otherwise restricted to guests staying a minimum of seven days.

My final conversion to weekend skiing came in Courchevel while I was waist-deep in shifting snow high in the notorious Tribes couloir above La Grave. Skiing there with Gavin Foster of Ski Weekend and the La Grave master guide Bruno Gardent, I had the best snow experience of the

entire season. The danger of La Grave has been well illustrated in newspaper accounts of the fatal accident there last spring involving British ski writers. The thrill of exploring Europe's most unadulterated expression of the *ski sauvage* ethos is one for which any serious skier will happily endure a tedious three-hour transfer by private car.

Ski Weekend whisked us out of the door of Geneva airport into arranged cars and along the motorway towards Grenoble in time to arrive at the humble Auberge Edelweiss for dinner. Cécile and Vincent, who run Edelweiss as an old-fashioned country inn with impeccable bourgeois cuisine, also act as foster parents to the small army of stunt skiers and filmmakers who flock into La Grave from around the world.

Ski Weekend's La Grave crowd

Sloping off

□ The two leaders in weekend skiing are Ski Weekend (01367 241636) and FlexiSki (01490 440445). Ski Weekend employs up to 25 mountain guides and instructors a week at its permanent base in Chamonix, the big-name resort with the quickest transfer time in the Alps.

□ Ski Weekend serves skiers of all abilities, but is at its best off piste with top guides in Chamonix and in the cult resort La Grave.

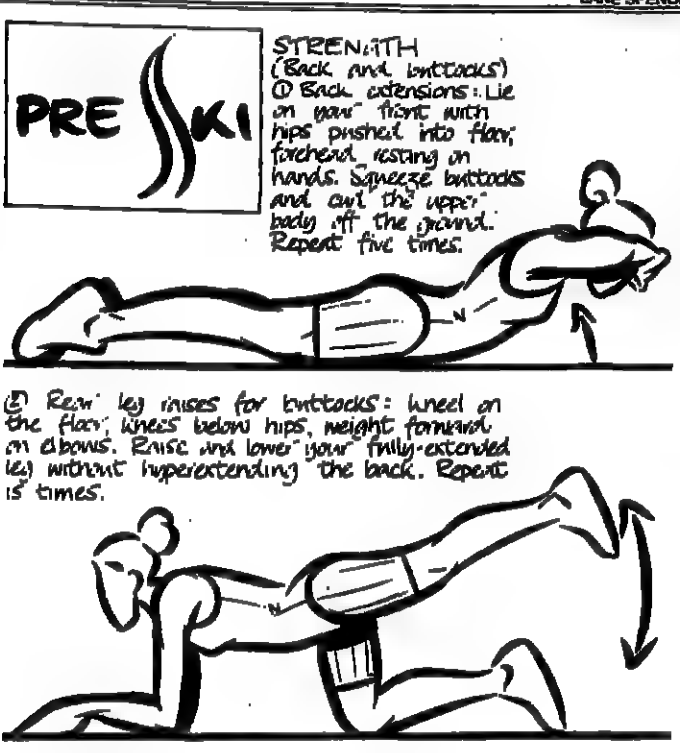
□ FlexiSki offers hard-core skiing in Verbier, within 90 minutes of transfer from Geneva. FlexiSki staff enjoy honorary status in Courchevel, where their corporate and short-break luxury holidays emphasise Courchevel's unequalled reputation for wild nightlife and smooth pistes.

□ Collineige (01276 24262) weekends in Chamonix offer the option of a mountain guide and accommodation in distinctive chalets.

□ Alpine Answers (0181-871 4656), the independent ski consultants, can arrange good value weekends, with meals, at a British-owned chalet in Megève.

were all experienced off-piste weekenders, many of them veterans of previous La Grave excursions. Ski Weekend makes a policy of using only highly experienced local mountain guides, where other off-piste firms often import British guides who don't live in the area they are skiing. This policy paid off handsomely when snowstorms closed La Grave's lift system to all skiers not accompanied, as we were, by local guides.

A week of skiing cannot escape some longeurs. A four-day weekend with the men and women I skied with in La Grave is more work than two weeks of pottering around the pistes in any other resort I can think of. Despite all the powder snow you could eat and couloirs and glaciers still unmarked by skis, I was ready after four days to go home, while I could still walk.



Exercises extracted from *Skilegs*, by Tessa Coker, available from the Ski Club of Great Britain, 118 Eaton Square, London SW1W 9AF, £2.50 including p&p. The Times cannot be held responsible for any injuries resulting from or sustained while carrying out the exercises and movements described.



COLLECT 30 TOKENS FOR A CHANCE TO WIN £20,000 CASH FOR AN 80-DAY HOLIDAY OF A LIFETIME — PLUS SAVE 10% ON ALL HOLIDAYS FEATURED

Win a holiday worth £3,500

Today and every day until the end of December, *The Times* and *The Sunday Times* are offering readers the exclusive chance to win one of 80 holidays for two worth more than £150,000 in total. You can also get ten per cent off all the holidays featured in our *Around the World* adventure.

Plus there is an opportunity to win £20,000 cash for an 80-day holiday of a lifetime.

Our series of 80 holidays around the world began in Europe, continued to South America with exciting tours of Belize, Chile, Argentina, Peru and Brazil; then to Pakistan, the jungles of India, Sri Lanka and Nepal. There were luxurious holidays to seven paradise resorts in the Caribbean and individually tailored safaris to Kenya, Zimbabwe, Botswana and South Africa. Last week there were trips to Thailand, Malaysia and Hong Kong.

Today we begin a week of holidays to the Middle East, beginning in the Arabian peninsula to one of the least known countries, Yemen. After centuries of virtual isolation, the doors to tourism have recently opened revealing spectacular scenery and decorative architecture.

You will also have a chance to win holidays to the magical city of Petra, to Syria, to Lebanon, Israel and Oman.

The tours are operated by Cox & Kings who have catered for discerning travellers for over two hundred years.

TEN PER CENT DISCOUNTS
Readers can take advantage of an exclusive ten per cent discount on every holiday featured during our



Silver ornaments adorn a woman from eastern Yemen

80-day *Around the World* competition. Many of them include five-star accommodation, superb meals, excursions led by qualified guides, safaris and sightseeing.

To get brochures for the holidays featured in previous weeks, please write to:
The Times Brochure Service, PO Box 9, Dunoon, Argyll, PA23 8QQ.
Bookings should be made through Cox & Kings before

February 28, 1996. All other terms and conditions relating to these holiday competitions and offers are contained in the brochures.

HOW TO WIN £20,000
Collect 30 of the 80 tokens which will appear every day in *The Times* and *The Sunday Times* until December 28, for the chance to win £20,000 cash to spend on an 80-day holiday of a lifetime. The

winner will be given help to work out a holiday itinerary.

Attach your 30 differently numbered tokens to the completed entry form below and you will be entered into our prize draw. Readers may collect 60 tokens for two chances of winning.

Previously published tokens may be obtained free of charge by sending a ssc to:

The Times/Sunday Times Holiday of a Lifetime Competition, Token Request, PO Box 480, London E1 9DN.

A maximum of four tokens can be supplied per application.

HOLIDAY PRIZE WINNERS:

The winner of our holiday to Hong Kong is: Dr J Dalgleish of Plymouth; the winner of our holiday to Thailand is: Ms C Phillips of Brimscombe, Wiltshire; the winner of our holiday to Singapore and Sentosa Island is: Mr P Conway of Winchester, Hants; the winner of our holiday to Penang, Malaysia, is Mr S Joynton of Glen Vine, Isle of Man.

Cox & Kings
FOUNDED 1758

FOR YOUR 10% HOLIDAY DISCOUNT CALL FOR A BROCHURE ON: 01369 70 77 11

14 days for two in Yemen to be won



Yemen's mountainous scenery and architecture contrast sharply with the rest of the Arab world

Today's prize, a 14-day trip to the land of the Queen of Sheba, takes you to the former republics of North and South Yemen visiting Marib, Shibam and Seyun and then down to the port of Mukalla on the Gulf of Aden.

ITINERARY:
Day 1 Fly to San'a, on Gulf Air, via Bahrain. Days 2-3 Stay at the Taj Sheba Hotel and go sightseeing in San'a. Day 4 Drive to Baraqish and on to the ancient village of Marib. Stay at the Bilquis Hotel. Day 5 Led by a Bedouin guide, cross the desert to Old Shabwa and Seyun, "town of a million palm trees", see the Sultan's Palace, the Tomb of Habshi and the Soup. Stay at the Al Salaam hotel in Seyun. Day 6 Visit Shibam with its mud-built "skyscrapers", and Tarim and Ainat. Day 7 Drive to Mukalla, a prosperous seaport, via Al Hajjarin, Siif, Wadi Doan, Bada, Rashid and Khuriba. Day 8 Tour Mukalla and fly back to

San'a. Day 9 Visit Wadi Dhahar, Thula, Shibam, Kawakaban and Hababa. Day 10 Drive via the central highlands to Ibb and Jibla. Stay overnight in Taiz at the Royal Hotel. Day 11 Explore the colourful town of Taiz then drive to Zabid, one of the oldest towns in Yemen. Continue to Bayt al Fakhi and Hodeidah. Day 12 Visit the mountain villages of Manakha, al Hajara and Bayt al Amir. Days 13-14 Return to London.

DATES OF DEPARTURE

March 2, April 6, October 12 and November 16, 1996. All departure dates are subject to availability.

The price, with our exclusive 10 per cent discount, is £1,615 (down from £1,795) and includes flights, 11 nights twinshare accommodation, local guide to accompany you on excursions, full board, transfers and sightseeing as detailed in the itinerary, a brief summary of which is reproduced here.

HOW TO ENTER

For your chance to win today's prize, phone your answers to the two questions below on our competition hotline: 0891 40 50 34 before midnight tonight. Calls are charged at 39p per minute cheap rate and 49p at all other times.

The winner will be selected at random from all correct entries received. Normal Times Newspapers competition rules apply.

THE QUESTIONS

1. The "skyscrapers" at Shibam are built of what?
2. Yemen was once home to which queen?

THE TIMES
Around
the World
in 80 Days
£20,000
TOKEN 48

AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS PRIZE DRAW ENTRY FORM

I enclose 30 tokens from *The Times/Sunday Times* and wish to enter the prize draw. Send to: *Around the World Prize Draw*, PO Box 6885, London E2 8SR. Closing date Friday January 12, 1996.

Mr/Ms/Ms/Ms First Name

Surname

Address

Postcode

It would help us if you answered these four questions:

1. Which of the following age groups do you fall into? (Please tick box)

1) 15-24 ☐ 2) 25-34 ☐ 3) 35-44 ☐

4) 45-54 ☐ 5) 55-64 ☐ 6) 65+ ☐

2. Which national daily newspaper(s) do you buy regularly (4-6 copies) during the week?

3. Which national daily newspaper(s) do you buy occasionally (3 copies or less) during the week?

4. Which national Sunday newspaper(s) do you buy regularly (2-4 copies a month)?

Times Newspapers and its marketing partners would like to inform you of future products and offers. If you would prefer not to receive such information, please tick here: ☐

IN THE SUNDAY TIMES TOMORROW: WIN A TOUR OF SYRIA AND LEBANON

SOUTH PACIFIC: Anthony Holden visits the tropical idylls of Fiji and Western Samoa

A bounty of lagoons and lush landscapes

Captain William Bligh of the infamous *HMS Bounty* never seemed to me the most enviable figure in British maritime history — until I visited Fiji. If you're going to be cast adrift by a bunch of macho mutineers, I can think of worse places for an unplanned sojourn.

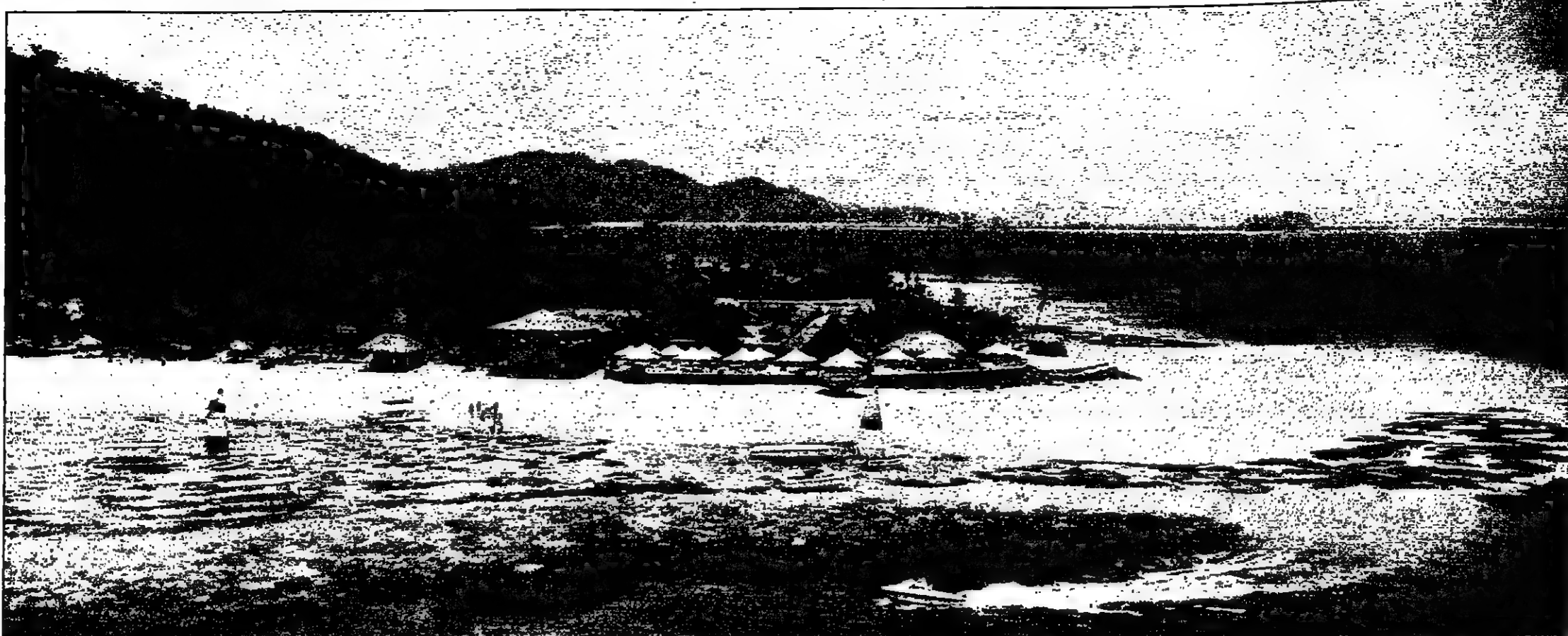
In those days, of course, the locals tended to regard tourists as just another course for dinner, to be marinated in coconut juice before roasting gently among the papayas and sweet potatoes. Two centuries on, I am pleased to report, the natives are among the friendliest on earth, in some of its most extravagantly beautiful surroundings.

That Bligh survived to tell the tale is witnessed by the straits named after him, marking his perilous passage from Tonga to Viti Levu, the largest of the 330 islands that today comprise the independent republic of Fiji. Where he was chased away by cannibals, I was greeted with a garland of frangipani, and welcoming cries of "Bula", the multi-purpose greeting that follows you everywhere.

The pallid European visitor has already enjoyed tantalising glimpses from the air of the lush volcanic landscape and impossibly turquoise lagoons below — if only through the blearest of eyes. After two all-day stints aboard a 747, relieved only when cast adrift by Air New Zealand for a brief Los Angeles stopover, the first thing you want to do is slump in one of the ritzy resort hotels within reach of Nadi international airport.

Packaged Americans may choose the Sheraton, and fun-lovers the Fijiian, but connoisseurs of the good life head for the Regent of Denarau Island, a luxury Four Seasons resort where Michael Kemp, a Lancastrian, leads a smiling staff outnumbering guests by at least two to one, offering so much choice amid its five restaurants that they say you can stay a month without eating the same meal twice.

The first thing to do, while surveying the pellucid Pacific with a wild surmise, is to take off your watch. You're not going to need it on "Fiji time", the locals' own, self-mocking name for their laid-back version of Spain's *mañana*. Time itself seems to melt in the South Pacific sun, which beams tirelessly down on attractions beyond the obvious water sports and championship golf course: a 2,000-species orchid garden, for instance, started



Castaway Island, one of a bewildering array of off-shore Shangri-Las. Only a lazy and foolish traveller fails to explore, by plane or boat, some of the countless smaller Fijian islands

by the late Raymond Burr, television's Perry Mason, and the human cooking-pot at the Tavuni Hill fort.

Fijian pride in their fierce warrior tradition is by night reflected in wild, exuberant grass-skirt dancing, noticeably more aggressive than similar entertainments in neighbouring islands. Avoid the front row — or prepare to be showered in sweat by the Pavarotti-scale Nureyev who comes at you with a distinctly worrying spear.

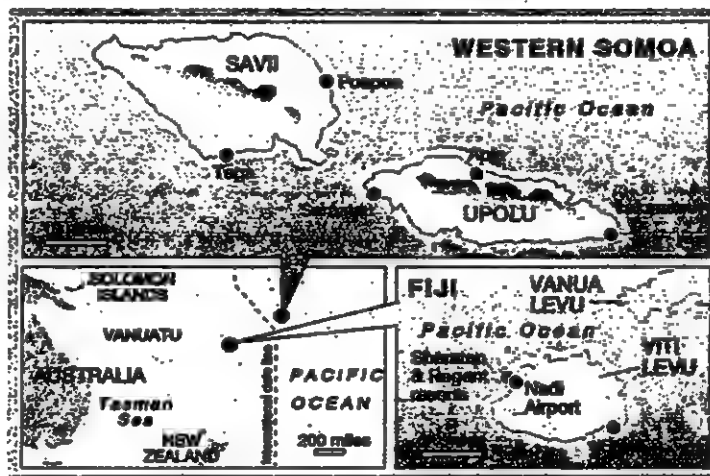
Prepare also to suspend your disbelief at the ancient Fijian rite of fire-walking. It's easy to scoff as native dancers stoke the flames before holy men, who are obliged to spend the previous fortnight shunning women and coconuts, tread a majestic path across white-hot stepping stones. If you're not convinced, check out those stones afterwards. I did, and I won't be trying it at home.

Be sure to accept the invitation of

local villagers to join them for dinner cooked in their lovo, an underground oven. After the ceremonial drinking of kava — a narcotic extract of shrub roots, which you must down in one (none too thrilling) gulp — you will feast cross-legged on suckling pig and home-grown vegetables before a luscious Fijian knees-up.

When it comes to lighting the fire, today's Fijian villagers may no longer need to rub two sticks together, as older tribesmen will expertly demonstrate. But the native lifestyle has otherwise changed little over the past few hundred years, as can be seen in a waterborne tour of traditional arts and crafts at the Pacific Harbour Cultural Centre. Amid the coral jewellery on sale here, or in nearby Sigatoka market, you can haggle for hand-carved wife-beating clubs and human brain-eating forks.

All this and more could well beguile a week on Viti Levu alone. But the entire Fijian archipelago,



covering more than 275,000 square miles of the South Pacific, offers a bewildering array of off-shore Shangri-Las. It is a lazy and indeed foolish traveller who goes all that way without venturing beyond the diverse delights along the coastal

road between Nadi (pronounced "Nandi") and the cosmopolitan bustle of Suva, Fiji's capital. By plane or boat there are countless smaller Fijian islands to explore, ringed by beaches so archetypically white-sanded and palm-

fringed that you half-expect to bump into Robinson Crusoe or Long John Silver, if not Sue Lawley. I opted for the two-hour ferry ride from Denarau marina to Castaway Island. As its clutch of thatched cottages (*bures*) approached over the azure horizon, I could feel my skin, then my soul sloughing off months of London grime. By the time the hotel band piped me ashore with a Fijian song of welcome, as if I were another Bligh landing in happier times, I was ready for some serious relaxation. After an arduous bout of beach reading, punctuated by several rums, I felt obliged to work it all off with a trip to the horizon by jet-ski. A snooze beneath the fan in my *bure* and it was soon time for more cocktails in the Sundowner Bar, the perfect place to watch that unique South Pacific sunset, followed by a beach barbecue.

There can be few more romantic places than a Fijian shore beneath the moonlight. For the unattached,

however, a word of warning. If a Fijian maiden wears her flower behind her left ear, she is "available". Behind her right, she is not. If you can't tell your left from your right, especially after too much rum, beware. Even out here, on your fantasy island, those fire-dancing warriors are lurking amid the palms.

How to get there

□ The author was a guest of Kuoni Travel (01306 74111), the Tourism Council of the South Pacific (0181-392 1838) and Air New Zealand (0181-741 2299).

□ Fiji and Western Samoa are South Pacific stopovers offered by Kuoni (01306 74111) in its return air fare to Auckland, Christchurch or Wellington, from £919 to £1,500.

□ Rooms at any of the resort hotels mentioned can be booked in the UK via Kuoni.

A gentle, sun-drenched world where time has stood still

Russian Waterways of the GOLDEN RING

The opening of the waterways between St Petersburg and Moscow allows us to link a visit to two great cities with a relaxing cruise that travels the Neva River, Lake Ladoga,

the Svir River, Lake Onega, the Baltic Canal, White Lake, the Volga River and finally the Moscow and Volga Canal. This intricate system of waterways has a beauty that is hard to describe. Serene, peaceful and timeless with silver birch and pine forests, sandy shores, calm flowing water and spectacular late sunsets, in these realms of the 'White Nights', calls will be at such historic towns as Uglich, where the blue cupolas decorated with the golden stars of the riverside church make a stunning landmark.

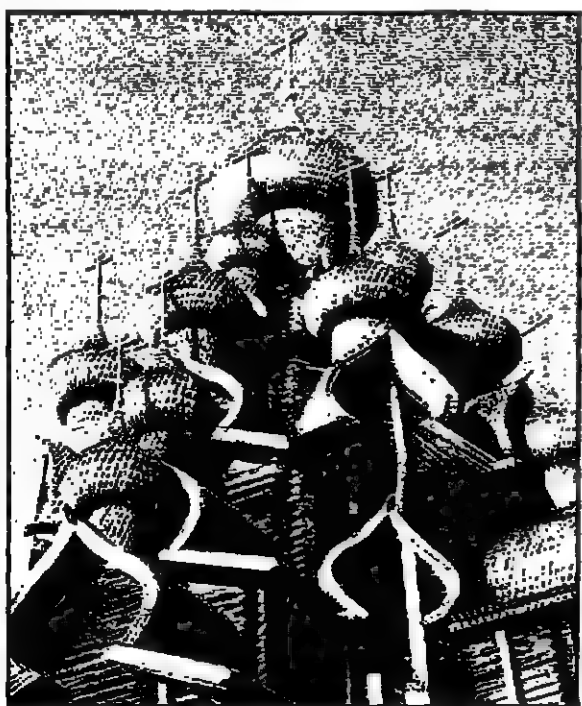
For many the visit to Kizhi Island in Lake Onega will be the highlight of the waterway journey. Here the magnificent Church of the Transfiguration with its 22 shimmering grey domes in three tiers are more than a match for the fairytale splendour of Moscow's St Basil's. From here we cruise through the fascinating waterway system through Goritsy to the cities of the Golden Ring, stopping at Yaroslavl and Uglich on the mighty Volga. These magical cities of Holy Russia still preserve their medieval kremlins, fortified monasteries and churches, in surroundings remote from the modern world.

For this journey we have selected the MS Karamzin which, although not as high a standard as our other vessel the MV Kirov, offers very good facilities considering the competitive tariff. This is especially relevant in view of the high hotel prices now applied in Russia due to the westernisation of the hotels. This tour will therefore appeal to those wishing to see unspoilt parts of Russia from an economical and comfortable base.

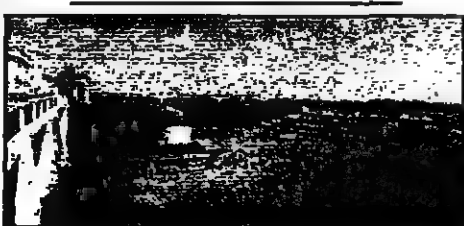
The MS Karamzin

This comfortable, well-maintained ship was built in Germany and partially renovated this year. All cabins are outside with large picture windows (except those on the Lower Deck that have two portholes), private shower, toilet and individual temperature control; the ship is fully air-conditioned. The bright, pleasant restaurant has windows on three sides offering views as you dine. Cuisine (Russian and Continental) is adjusted to western taste. There is a main lounge/bar with live music, several more lounges, a souvenir shop, beauty shop and ample deck space. Laundry service is available and a medical doctor is on board.

Because the ship is now under Western management, you can expect many



linking St Petersburg and Moscow along the quiet rivers, lakes and canals of Russia
10 nights from £595.00*



upgraded amenities (including quality towels, soap, toilet paper, coffee) and better food, service, cruise director and staff.

Itinerary

Day 1 Fly from London Gatwick to St Petersburg. Drive to the MS Karamzin.
Day 2 In the morning a sightseeing tour of the city will include Peter and Paul Fortress.
Day 3 Morning visit to the Hermitage Museum. Afternoon visit to Pushkin, the blue and gold rococo palace designed for the Empress Elizabeth. Sail in the evening.
Day 4 Svir Stry - the day is spent leisurely cruising Lake Ladoga and the Svir River stopping at the village of Svir Stry.
Day 5 Kizhi Island - sail across Lake Onega to Kizhi and see the typical wooden churches, houses with early barns and a windmill. A

visit will be made to the Transfiguration Church.

Day 6 Goritsy - sail along the Baltic Canal and across White Lake to the town of Goritsy to visit the Kirillo-Belozerski Monastery.

Day 7 Yaroslavl - one of the seven cities of the 'Golden Ring'. A city sightseeing tour will include some of the many churches and fine examples of 16th-century architecture.

Day 8 Uglich - cruise along the Volga to Uglich. Founded in the 12th century, it was here that even the Terrible's youngest son was murdered. Sail in the evening towards Moscow crossing the Moscow/Volga Canal.

Day 9 Sail along the River Moskva reaching Moscow in the late morning. A city tour is arranged for the afternoon.

Day 10 Morning city tour of Moscow to see Red Square, St Basil's Cathedral and the Kremlin including a visit to the Armoury Museum.

Day 11 Transfer to the airport for the flight from Moscow to Gatwick.

Departure Dates & Prices

1996 - per person on Lower Deck

May 4** 15 £595.00*

June 22** £595.00*

July 3, 13** 24 £595.00*

August 31** £595.00*

September 11, 21** £595.00*

October 2 £595.00*

*We are making available the first 20 places at the special tariff of £595 per person.

** Prices are based on a 10-day cruise (Moscow to St Petersburg) and include one extra night visiting Kirovsk/LAS supplement per person.

Supplements per person

Single cabin £300.00

Main Deck £25.00

Upper Deck £150.00

Boat Deck £220.00

Prices include: return air travel, full board, excursions and entrance fees, all transportation, services and cruise director. Not included: travel insurance, airport taxes, visa, tips. All prices are subject to change.

Longer Duration

A 14-night itinerary is also available at a supplement of £240 per person on the following dates: May 25, June 8, August 3 and 17. Please contact us for details.

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While the rest of the world gets on with today, it's still yesterday in Western Samoa. A sudden detour in the international dateline, as it otherwise scythes straight down the South Pacific, appears to bend a courteous knee to these serenely beautiful islands, as if acknowledging their reluctance, even by sleepy South Seas standards, to be dragged from one day to the next.

Contentedly lagging a few centuries behind western civilisation, this is also the last place in the world to move on past midnight. Fly in from the west and you'll get one day of your life twice.

Given such a welcome bonus, there can be few better places to spend it. Western Samoa, two main islands and a few outcrops, lies at the very heart of Polynesia, not far south of the equator. Hot and humid all year round, with a rainy season from November to April, it combines all the sun-steeped, palm-fronted, azure-watered blessings of the South Pacific with an unspoilt, unhurried, understanding way of life locally known as *fa'a Samoa*.

No wonder Robert Louis Stevenson, a restless traveller all his life, finally chose to put his feet up here in 1889, hoping the climate would ease his sufferings from tuberculosis. And it did for five years, until he died of a stroke at 44 while cooking his family dinner.

Now Stevenson's house, Vailima, is lovingly preserved on 'Upolu', Western Samoa's main island. An arduous, hour-long climb through lush tropical rain-forest brings the literary hiker to the tomb at the summit of his private mountain, Mount Vaea, where his famous self-epitaph moistens even the dehydrated eye.

This be the verse you grave for me:
'Here he lies where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.'

A century on, Vailima is famed also as the name of a beer brewed on the outskirts of Apia, 'Upolu's capital, the kind of racy Pacific hub redolent of another Samoa-inspired writer, Somerset Maugham.

In Apia's main hotel, Aggie Grey's, a pseudo-Raffles reeking of better days, lurks

Just some enchanted islands



Western Samoans enjoy an unhurried way of life

another literary surprise. The eponymous Aggie, the daughter of a Samoan by an emigrant Brit, saw World War Two convert her haven for lonely GIs to a large and fashionable hotel. Among her regulars was James Michener, then writing the *Tales from the South Pacific* on which Rodgers and Hammerstein were to base their musical. Michener made his friend Aggie Grey, who continued to charm guests until her death in 1988 at 91, immortal as *South Pacific's* Bloody Mary.

It was at Aggie's that Martin Brando stayed while filming *Mutiny on the Bounty* and Gary Cooper *Return to Paradise*. Even Hollywood could not improve on the spectacular waterfalls, Tarzan-type vegetation and sumptuous beach locations of Western Samoa. Along 'Upolu's' south coast, on the very sand where once Cooper mourned his lost love, you can snooze in your own private *fa'a* — a thatched, miniature version of the

houses-without-walls in which most Samoans still live — while friendly locals cook you a delicious barbecue lunch.

Western Samoa offers 640 rooms in 32 hotels — including those on the other main island, Savai'i, an hour's ferry ride from Apia to even more idyllic, remoter beaches. But few come as close to paradise as a

cluster of upmarket beach fales around a gourmet restaurant in southern 'Upolu', 30 minutes from Apia, where a trio of disenchanted American city exiles have made their own dream — and now those of others — come true.

The Coconut Beach Club and Resort is the brainchild of Barry and Jennifer Rose, two Los Angeles lawyers who ten years ago decided to sell up and go native. After a vain worldwide search for Utopia, they fed their criteria into a computer — which came up with Western Samoa. The personal paradise they created for themselves has now grown into a small, select dreamland for those travellers who want to get away from it all.

Behind the bar, the genial storyteller mixing your pre-prandial cocktail also happens to be the tribal chieftain of the local village. Hotel guests are honorary villagers for the duration, and are welcome to join in any of the local rites, from eating delicious corned beef (*pisupo*) cooked in the earth (*umu*) to playing *kirikiti*, the eccentric Samoan version of cricket, or even dressing up as drag queens (*fa'afine*).

In 1962, after years of domination by Germany, then New Zealand, Western Samoa became the first South Pacific island to gain its independence. As a result, perhaps, its people retain their ancient way of life more genuinely than any of their neighbours. Only 60 miles to the east, across the 171st meridian, the fast-food joints and garish night-spots of American Samoa show just how fast and furiously western ways can wreak cyclone-scale havoc on the true, gentle South Pacific experience.

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PROV

AFRICA: Simon Barnes takes flight over a lion-coloured land; Justin Cartwright walks in Masai country



The Luangwa River: a perfect introduction to Africa

Madly in love with Zambia's crazy river

I was halfway up a mountain in Borneo when I reached a decision. No more silly stunts. I will climb no more mountains for their mere there-ness. I will never again white-water raft. And I will never bungee-jump.

So what was I doing, strapping myself into a microlight in the middle of the African bush? Why was I going to ride this lawn-mower-engined hang-glider over the vastness of the Luangwa valley in Zambia? Had I gone back on my resolution?

Surely not. For this was not a quick fix for the adrenalin-junkie that lurks within all people of spirit. It was an Aspect of Love. Nothing less.

How can anyone be in love with a river? Well, it is quite easy when the river in question is the Luangwa. It empties into the Zambezi hundreds of miles further south: for millennia it has zigged and zagged its way across the floor of this southern spur of the Great Rift that is the 'Luangwa valley'.

Six years ago, I sat on one of its cliff-like banks, dangling my feet over the edge and drinking a Masi beer from the bottle while, a few hundred yards downstream, a lion sat with her paws equally a-dangle over the edge.

I have ridden in a bucking Land Cruiser onto one of its vast, sprawling beaches just five minutes after 500 buffalo had been down to drink — there to discover that three of them did not complete their journey, lying warm and dead in the arms of a ferocious lion pride.

On this, my most recent trip, I watched three elephants playing silly follows in one of the few deepish bits left in this, the height of the dry season. One kept disappearing, leaving in sight only a snorkeling trunk. And I watched a colony of carmine bee-eaters, birds whose colour is the impossible crimson of synthetic cherry-ade, tunneling deep into the river bank to nest. It is a mad river this, crazy, untamed and utterly devastat-

ing in its mood swings. At the start of this trip, I visited the Shire River in Malawi: broad, calm, gentle in temperament: a pacific river, a river that observes the decencies.

And so back to Luangwa. Luangwa was my introduction to Africa; this was my tenth visit to Africa, my fifth to Luangwa, including a two-month sabbatical three years back. It is the perfect introduction to the Great Continent: the perfect place for a second trip. I hope I am spared to investigate possibilities of its being the perfect place for a sixth, a seventh...

I have waded the Luangwa armpit deep. (It is full of crocodiles and in retrospect it was not a particularly smart thing to do. But it was not a stunt: I did need to get to the other side.)

And I have walked endless miles across the valley, along the banks, into the riverine glades, into the open plains, up onto its rare eminences. Walking — for walking is the best way to

enjoy the bush. There, relating to the beasts as mammal to mammal, you are not so much observer as observed. On my last walk on this trip, as splendid as any trip and any walk I have done, I encountered lions on four separate occasions. Beautifully controlled encounters, too, in which neither species of mammal involved — not *Homo sapiens* and not *Panthera leo* — were threatened, or even inconvenienced.

They looked: we looked back. Lions in a lion-coloured land.

I met them on and around a river of sand, the Lubi, a dry tributary of the Luangwa with occasional water holes. In the dry season, water is life. As the dry season boils on, the Luangwa dwindles to a ditch, one which you can wade in places — as I have done on many an occasion — without getting your knees wet.

The strip of water is a magnet, a life force, and all the zebras and other herbivores



The Luangwa is a magnet where the zebras and other herbivores must come down and drink

Where to stay on a Zambian safari

□ The author was a guest of Naturetrek (01962 733051) and Wildlife Worldwide (0181-667 9159). The 17-day trip cost £2,700.

□ Zambia Chibemba. A comfortable lodge with a swimming river, frontage and superb game-viewing. From there, I made a three-day walking safari, overnighting in their two bush camps. This sort of thing really is the best of Africa.

□ Tafika. A small camp with stunning views of lions and leopards at night. Microlight flights, £35.

□ Kapani. A comfortable lodge just outside the park. Excellent walking and game-driving.

dry and shrivel and become gentle gardens of fertility nibbled daintily by antelope. A time-lapse film of the past hundred millennia would show the river thrashing like a wounded snake. And every year it changes and fills and floods and becomes a torrent as the water drains from the hills and the escarpments; and every year it almost vanishes. Sometimes it stops altogether: wilfully capricious.

All this and more was revealed as, heedless of rational fears, adrenalin-drunk, I leant over the side and gazed and whooped at the Luangwa. Giraffes browsed unmoved: kudus, with barley-sugar horns, looked up with sad and wondering eyes. And best, six lions spread out on a huge sandy Luangwa beach glared up.

One sprang to her feet and lashed her tail at us, daring us to fly lower, so she could pull us down like a guinea fowl.

Oh yes, I flew. But as soon as you arrive in Luangwa, no matter what you do, your soul takes wing.

At the very centre of the universe

East Africa owes much of its character to the Masai. Because they do not hunt the game and because they do not till the soil, the great plains where they live have retained their grandeur. The contrast between Masai areas and those of other tribes is stark. There are 30 other tribes in East Africa, but only the Masai have really entered the consciousness of the tourist.

There are places in East Africa where you can walk among cattle and wildlife, as the Masai do, to experience Africa in a way that no tourist in a minibus ever does. I have made four such walks in recent years, in northern Kenya, in the Masai Mara and in Tanzania.

The first great difference between a walk and a minibus trip is the sense of danger. You can call it excitement if you like, but there is a very real sense that walking and camping in the wild are, if only marginally, dangerous. You will see elephants, you will see buffaloes.

Even if you don't see lions, you will certainly hear them roaring. And it is important to go with an experienced guide, particularly if you want to get close to big game.

Ron Beaton is one of the most experienced guides in Africa. With his wife, Pauline, he runs a company called Off the Beaten Track. They offer walking safaris in vast tracts of Masai land, which usually start at their simple homestead with elephants and lions in the garden.

All Ron's walks are tailored to your requirements: you can spend nights out in the bush in fly-camps or in luxury camps. The fly-camps, with a comfortable bed, a shower and a mess tent where his staff serve gargantuan meals, are far from spartan.

You can walk from one campsite to the next, in say about four hours, or stroll by the Mara River, to a breakfast site with a view of the giant crocodiles and squabbling hippos. At all times you will be accompanied by Ron with a large gun, and by two trackers.

It is best perhaps to spend one or two nights at the start of your safari in one of the luxurious camps such as Kichwe Tembo, to get your bearings and to tick off your animals before going out in the bush.

I had many memorable experiences. With Ron's help, I was able to approach within 20 yards of a herd of feeding elephants and to sit on a rock and watch a lioness dozing in the last warmth of the day. Probably the least-known game reserve in Africa is Mkomazi, the Tanzanian section of the more famous Tsavo. It had been neglected until 1989, when the Tanzanians decided to bring it back from the brink of collapse.

George Adamson's former assistant and friend, Tony Fitzjohn, was, coincidentally, looking for a place to set up the George Adamson Trust to continue his work. Fitzjohn was able to bring funds, enthusiasm, a plane and experience to the task. Before he could start on his own passion

— the rehabilitation of various species — he realised that he would have to help the demoralised and under-equipped game department to reclaim what was theirs. Roads have been put in, airstrips carved out of the bush and the boundaries clearly defined. Best of all, an energetic warden is in charge.

Mkomazi is dry, bush country, varying from steep valleys near the Pare Mountains, to vast plains on the Kenyan border. Most of the year you won't see the huge herds of animals, but you will see dik-diks, kudus, buffaloes, giraffes, zebras and elephants.

Unvisited and neglected

Our longest walk was about eight hours, up the escarpment. We were in the shadow of the Mountain of God, but God had not yet given the Masai rain. Of all the peoples in Africa, the Masai seem to have retained the most powerful sense of the worth of their own customs. Their way of life is under threat.

One day we drove to Lake Natron, a ghostly and beautiful place. The famous flamingoes chattered like electric lawnmowers above the stillness of the lake. We walked along the flats, where a herd of wildebeest was grazing on the edge of a small stream. On the way back we passed through uplands full of zebras, oryxes, gazelles and Masai cattle. We arrived at our camp as the sun was setting to find a crackling fire and the obligatory three-course meal in preparation. In a nearby thicket, lions were roaring; the Masai women who were gathering wood near our camp hurried back to their *manyatta*. I took a shower under a bucket of warm, woodsmoke-scented water. Succumbing to the powerful charm of nightfall in Africa is almost guilt-inducing, like a weakness for country and western music. But as the night rolled down from the escarpment, it was not difficult to believe that God lived on Lengai. Indeed, by the end of my stay, I found myself sharing the Masai's view that they were at the very centre of the universe.

An "adventure" holiday in East Africa — walking in the Mara, riding in the Aberdare Mountains, a camel safari in Samburiland, camping in the Mahala chimpanzee reserve on Lake Tanganyika, fishing on Lake Victoria, walking in the Selous or Mkomazi — will dispel any notion that the earth is overrun by tourists from Stuttgart and San Diego.

● Justin Cartwright is the author of *Masai Dreaming* (Picador, £5.99).

● Four-day safaris with the Beaton's, walking five to ten miles a day, with meals in the open and accommodation in tents with showers cost £602 a person. Full board, including flights to the base camp.

● Safaris start from Nairobi on Mondays and Fridays. Details: Abercrombie & Kent (0171-730 9600).



A woman of the Masai: powerful sense of worth

though Mkomazi has been, you will not have to rough it there. I spent a memorable time with Tony Fitzjohn and Kim Ellis, who have set up a fine camp with a view stretching hundreds of miles into Tsavo. On a clear day you can see Kilimanjaro. Kim and Tony do not offer safaris, but Abercrombie & Kent do, and other specialists are likely to follow suit. This is connoisseurs' Africa, ideal for walking.

Ol Doiyo Lengai is the Masai's Mountain of God. It lies just to the east of Ngorongoro in Tanzania between Lakes Manyara and Natron. This, I decided, was the perfect place for a walking safari, well off the tourist track. With a Masai-speaking driver and a cook, I made camp near a dry watercourse and walked with some Masai from a nearby *manyatta*.

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WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 25

SLEAZO
(a) Something sleazy or pornographic, US slang.

TAMWORTH
(b) The name of a town in Staffordshire, used absolutely or attributively to designate a pig of the breed of this name, usually red or brown in colour, lean and large in build, and used to produce bacon. The breed was first developed in this area, and is now almost extinct.

VENDEUSE
(c) A saleswoman, specifically one employed in a fashion house. Muriel Sharp, *Eye of Love*, 1957: "In the show-room Miss Mohyenn, venduse and model, and Miss Harris, who fitted, were as usual discussing the private lives of film-stars."

TEBETH
(d) The fourth month of the Jewish year (though placed tenth in the traditional list of months, corresponding to parts of December and January). From the Hebrew *tebet*. *Wycliffe's Bible*, *Esther*, circa 1382.

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How to learn French without tears

A Francophile takes a crash course to brush up her language skills

Eric looked me straight in the eyes and contorted his mouth into a variety of unnatural shapes. Out came sounds that might be vaguely written down as "ouou", "urrrrr" and "huh".

"At home last night," he told me in French, "I looked in the mirror to see what I do when I make these sounds with which you have such difficulty." Despite our facial gymnastics and the efforts of Florence and Veronique, Eric's colleagues, I fear there are some French sounds I was never designed to articulate like a native.

Yet the four-week course at the EF Language School in Nice during my sabbatical leave improved immeasurably my grasp of French, especially my comprehension. And it was by no means all work, despite the five hours a day in a classroom. Just staying on the Riviera in mid-winter, and the change from my normal lifestyle, juggling work and teenage children, imbued the month with the gaily, even gaily, feel of a holiday.

For years, my inability to communicate intelligibly in French had nagged at me. The only way to learn, everyone said, was to immerse oneself in the language. The principle is simple. A language is learned by the student for a set time during which teachers discourage the use of one's native tongue.

On arrival at the school, in the centre of Nice, we sat an initial test covering grammar, oral and written communication skills, before being placed in classes. In mine, which, on average, had six students over the month, we varied in our knowledge. Some, like me, had not studied French for years but had regularly visited France on holiday; most of the young ones had only recently left school.

Though on occasion I would struggle and, at other times, feel we were repeating a lesson too often, we all kept pace well. The courses were worked out so that the basics were being instilled the whole time. But a variety of methods was used: work in the language laboratory and "fun" exercises. We were all there for the same purpose, so an immediate rapport developed, helped by chais during breaks either in

the canteen or the bars and cafes near by.

I did "cheat" — but then so did everyone else — by chatting to compatriots in English. Yet, one morning, I realised that not a word of English had passed my lips for three days.

The school laid on daily excursions around Nice and to the nearby area which were always popular. Weekend trips to Venice and the local ski resorts, for example, were also arranged. As I had a car, I tended to explore the Côte d'Azur after school and ski at weekends at Isola 2000, only one and a half hours away.

One of the bonuses of the EF school is its emphasis on students living with host families. My "family", a very sprightly retired couple, could not have been kinder. Since we had to communicate in French or stay silent (for me an impossibility), I was forced to find ways of expressing myself, and Guy and Danielle did their best not to let the pain of listening to my appalling pronunciation show.

I had my own key, and freedom to come and go as I liked. Danielle, a fantastic cook, sent me off in the mornings with a packed lunch and would

sigh deeply if I ate fewer than three courses for supper. Most other students were content with their host families, although the amount of conversation — and familiarity — varied.

I had been warned that one danger of being taught by such an intensive method was that you can lose your skills all too quickly if you do not use them. Hopefully, since it took so much effort by my teachers to ingrain the rudiments into my stubborn brain, they will stick in there a bit longer.

SHEILA GUNN

■ The author was a guest of EF International Language Schools (0171-795 6675; fax 0171-795 6633), 5 Kensington Church Street, London W8 4LE. Courses in Nice (including rooms, meals and tuition) cost from £192-£365 per week. The four-week Nice course of 20 lessons, rooms and meals, costs £1,380. For enrolments on intensive courses of 12 weeks or more in Nice, Reims, Munich or Barcelona, made before December 15, a free return flight is offered.

CITY BREAKS: After you have feasted royally, Budapest's distinctive nightlife beckons



The Chain Bridge, designed by a Scottish engineer, Adam Clark, looks spectacular at night when it is illuminated. The bridge was the first permanent link between Buda and Pest.

Let them eat chocolate cake

The broad sweep of the Danube through Budapest has a particular appeal just now.

Most days the river is deserted except for the occasional hydrofoil bound for Vienna, and even pleasure boats barely intrude upon the scene. The autumn sunshine gives the city a contented hue. There is nothing of the frenetically fashionable pace of other eastern European capitals. Buda, the ancient city on the hill overlooking the more modern Pest across the river, and joined by the magnificent Chain Bridge, is gradually but tastefully being restored to its full glory. McDonald's and Marks and Spencer have arrived, but so far they have not dented Hungary's dignity.

Wherever you walk through its broad main streets you feel that whatever recent history may have inflicted on Budapest its people have never forgotten what is important in life: how to live.

On Sunday mornings people flock to the Széchenyi bathhouse to sit in 70F water soaking up the medicinal benefits of the ancient waters which well up from 1,000 metres below. In one corner bronzed and grey-headed

aficionados are playing chess on larger than life boards; wreathed in the rising steam in another a couple canoodle, but most are content to read the paper or just doze. Behind the faded yellow-ochre main buildings that must have seen more deals and political plots than can be imagined. Leading off from the main baths are passageways to sauna baths and massage rooms. Survive the pummeling and reward yourself with refreshments in the long, covered terrace that surrounds the bathhouse.

Food and the vitality of passionate gypsy music seem to be everywhere in Budapest. Fine, refined cakes of extraordinary richness are the speciality in places such as the Ruszwurm, a baroque café, a short walk from the equally baroque royal palace. In the 19th century Vilmos Ruszwurm's pastries were so special that some Viennese sent their carriages to collect them.

The Ruszwurm is packed with ladies of a certain age delicately tasting large slices of chocolate layer cakes that come in almost as many varieties as there are guests. The slender waitresses, in contrast, clearly manage to avoid temptation as deftly as they avoid the tables, darting here and there, their trays stacked with

chocolate goodies. Rokokó torta is recommended — as sumptuous as its name implies.

But eating cake on a quiet Sunday turned out to be the only really quiet meal of the weekend — tourists turning out at any of the wonderful traditional restaurants such as the Csarda are fair game for mischief-making. The trick is to sit near the orchestra, something I didn't remember until it was almost the end of our weekend in Budapest. If you don't remember that tip then be prepared to join in the fun, whether you like it or not. Most of the time it doesn't amount to anything more than swirling round the floor with a large-bodied gypsy singer, and enthusiasm counts for more than skill. But it can be more demanding — dancing blindfolded with a flagon of wine on your head.

The meals are massive with lashings of meat, vegetables and Bull's

Blood wine and, of course, paprika and garlic seasoning to match the generous helpings.

But it is best not to indulge too heavily before you hit Budapest's trendiest night spot, the Hölly Gulyás. That may be the name of a 30-year-old dance that lasted only as long as it takes to say it but it's very much the last word in modern nightlife Budapest-style. The Hölly Gulyás is a sort of nightlife supermarket complex. You can start with a coffee shop and then graduate to a country and western bar or a rock café before reaching the disco.

At the disco there is everything you would expect to find in the West, but its clientele are stuck in that quaint era of innocence when only girls danced with each other. "Don't fancy your chances of pulling anything here, David," teased one of the girls in our group. As my eyes became accustomed to the gloom I could see what she meant: the average age of the hopping teenies was about 12.

DAVID WATTS

Short breaks in Budapest

■ The author was a guest of Travelscene (0181-427 8800), whose two night weekend breaks start from £319 and include return British Airways flights from Heathrow, return transfers to hotel and B&B accommodation.

■ Travelscene offers a choice of four hotels in the city, two in Buda and two in Pest. Special flight discounts from British Airways until March 31, 1996 reduce package prices by a further £40.

■ British Airways (0345 22211) flies to Budapest three times a day, with fares available from £199.

■ Opera House tickets cost from around 50p to £7.50; guided tour around Opera House £2. Tram or subway tickets approx 17p each. Csarda evening including meal and folklore performance: £10. Entrance to Széchenyi Bathhouse: £1.

Antigua update

There is still great confusion over which hotels on Antigua are back in business in the aftermath of Hurricane Luis. Harvey Elliott writes.

My local travel agent had not been notified which hotels were open and which were still closed for repairs.

At the Antiguan High Commission, an official said: "Sandals is due to reopen on December 10." Wrong. If work is completed, it should reopen on January 18.

The peak tourist season begins on December 15 and many leading hotels intend being fully operational by then. The Rex Halcym, for example, is already back in business.

Anyone thinking of going to Antigua must check with the tour operator before making a booking. And don't forget that the pictures in the brochures were taken before the hurricane destroyed countless palm trees.

■ Travelsphere Holidays (01858 410818) is offering a weekend in the Rhine Valley, taking in a tour of Cologne's Christmas market and a stop in Bruges, where travellers can stock up on Belgian chocolate. The coach trip, on December 15 to 17, takes Le Shuttle, and costs from £79.

■ To guarantee a White Christmas, Leger Holidays (01709 833833) is offering a six-day festive break in the Austrian Alps. Departing from Heathrow or Manchester on December 22, the trip includes five nights half-board near Salzburg plus a Christmas lunch, with excursions to Salzburg and the Austrian Lake District. Price from £549 per person for two sharing.

■ The Imaginative Traveller (0181-742 8612) has a 15-day Southern Thailand tour starting in Bangkok on December 16. The tour includes walks through the Khao Sok rainforest with overnight accommodation in a floating guesthouse, plus Christmas Eve camping on an uninhabited island. The cost is £515 per person, including accommodation, guides and some meals, plus about £650 for return flights from Heathrow.

■ Hendra Holidays (01637 875778) offers a week's Christmas or New Year golfing break at the Los Arqueros

resort, near Marbella in Spain. Departures from Gatwick on December 23 or 30. Price £345, including return flights and one free round of golf per day. Four people sharing a two-bedroom apartment.

■ Mundi Color Holidays (0171-828 6021) has a weekend break in Madrid for art lovers, including free entry to the three leading art museums, the Prado, the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza and the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia. Departures every Friday until December 15. Prices from £239 per person for a two-night stay in the two-star Asturias Hotel. Return flights from Heathrow.

■ Visit the Mountains of the Moon with Sherpa Expeditions (0181-577 2717) on a 19-day trek in Uganda. The departure date is December 12, and the cost £1,555 per person, including flights from Heathrow, accommodation — mainly camping with all meals, vehicle support and a guide.

■ Great Rail Journeys (01904 679969) is offering a 19-day tour of South Africa, including a six-day rail excursion around the Cape, travelling first class. This is followed by a trip on the Blue Train from Cape Town to Pretoria. The

package includes a dinner cruise on the Krugersdorp. Price £2,450 per person including return flights from Heathrow or Manchester, seven nights accommodation on trains with all meals, plus ten nights in hotels with breakfast. Departs March 14, 1996.

■ A weekend exploring the South of England's most famous gardens is on offer from Solo's (0181-202 0855). From its 50 plus brochures, the trip includes visits to Sissinghurst, Bateman's and Stourhead. The price of £199 per person includes two nights' half-board single room accommodation at the Ashford International Hotel in Kent, transport, garden guides and entrance fees. June 14/15, 1996.

PERRY CLEVELAND-PECK

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Beijing + Shanghai (52 nights)	£ 225
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Beijing + Shanghai (61 nights)	£ 225
Beijing + Shanghai (64 nights)	£ 225
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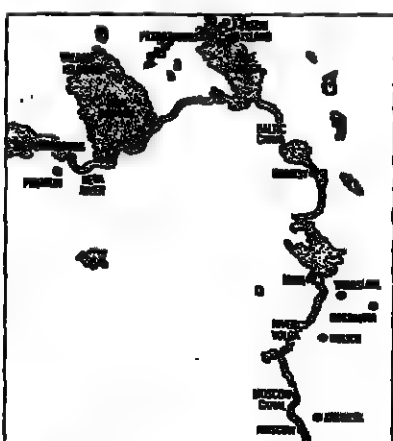
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BRITAIN: Walking high in Gloucestershire; eating oysters in Colchester; exploring the shadows of Henry VIII

To the top of the singing hill

It's no more than a pimple in terms of height. With a summit measuring 969ft, May Hill is hardly in the pantheon of momentous peaks. Yet as you drive down the A40 on the straightest of roads from Cheltenham to Gloucester there are but two landmarks dominating the landscape.

Towards the left, as you near the city, is the light and lacey tower of Gloucester Cathedral, newly cleaned and gleaming. And on the horizon, to the right, is May Hill, a hump-backed left-over from the nearby Malverns, that sits there like a snoozing whale with one distinctive additional feature. This is May Hill's topknot of tall, striking trees, a copse of Corsican pines planted there in 1888, a year late, in celebration of Queen Victoria's golden jubilee. They provide the beckoning beacon for those heading westward home and, more than that, a natural observatory of the Severn Vale, in the heart of England.

Or, as Ivor Gurney put it: "May Hill that Gloucester dwellers 'Gaint every sunset see'."

And some spectacular ones there have been of late. Take the ring road round Gloucester, cross the Severn on the road to Ross-on-Wye, turn right on to the B4215 to Newent, passing first the elegant spire of Holy Innocents, at Highnam, where Parry wrote the music to Blake's inspired *Jerusalem*. Already between the hedge-rows you can begin to feel the insistent pull of May Hill, which lies nine miles west of Gloucester and three miles southwest of the half-timbered medieval town of Newent, founded by three monks



from the Abbey of Cormeilles in the wake of conquering William.

May Hill appears and disappears as you drive the twisting roads. In Newent following the High Street signs for Clifford's Mesne and the National Birds of Prey Centre. There are several ways up, one past the Glasshouse Inn, which takes its name from Huguenot refugees who set up a glass furnace in 1598, to May Hill village itself and edging your way down Yartleton Lane. Yartleton being the hill's original name, to a stile on your right.

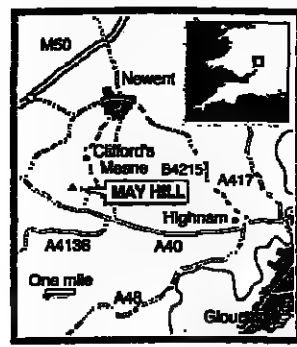
There are other lanes that duck and dive towards the top. The best way is to turn right in Clifford's Mesne past the Yew Tree pub. Follow a single track through the wooded hillside for three-

quarters of a mile, park by the fence. Two bracken-embroidered paths offer themselves. Take the right-hand one, on a not too difficult climb, up to a stile. A National Trust notice informs you that this is May Hill Common, circled by deep deciduous woodland for at least three centuries, now being overtaken by conifers, which was bought by the Trust in 1935. However, the four acres at the summit itself, declared a site of special scientific interest in 1952, remains in parish care. Perhaps with good reason since it was long ago dedicated to the poor as a place of recreation.

Ancient man obviously made May Hill a defensible place, worked flints having been found in the past, though there is no recognisable camp, just the shallow re-

Quick guide to the area

- Where to stay: Old Court Hotel, Church Street, Newent (01531 820522); B&B from £47 for two.
- Where to eat: Souters, 1 Culver Street, Newent (01531 820896); by far the best locally, evenings only.
- What else to see: The National Birds of Prey Centre (01531 820286), between Newent and Clifford's Mesne, open Feb-Nov; 200 birds on display and four flying demonstrations a day.



mains of a circular ditch 100 yards in diameter. Local lore and legend provides many a romantic reason for the name, Nathaniel Spencer recording in 1771 a connection with "May Day Games".

One defunct custom was for young people from the neighbourhood to meet on May Hill on May Day, the start of summer in the Celtic calendar, and clash in a mock battle, one side fighting symbolically for the arrival of summer, the other for winter. Victory, naturally, went to the summer people, who chanted their way home to Newent carrying branches of new green leaf and budding flowers.

Morris men danced round the trees in the last century, a ceremony now revived

on May Day. There are stories too of the remains of a lost castle, of hidden Civil War booty, and of a secret cave where Protestants prayed in fear of their lives during Mary Tudor's reign.

But the true impact of May Hill is its pure physical beauty. As you arrive on the heathland with its sheep grazing among the gorse and stunted trees, the grass itself has a spring to it that leads you up a gentle slope. As you rise, new vistas appear, the blue-green Malverns, the Cotswold escarpment and the dark faraway hills of Wales. The big sky gets bigger and on a clear day a dozen of the old counties are spread-eagled into view. Whatever way you turn you see the making of the English landscape with all its patchwork of colours and delights.

GERALD ISAAMAN

The trees sing their own song of the day as the wind swishes through the diadem of almost a hundred that stand like masts before the storm at the top, a different descent coming with each of the seasons. The music provides the prelude for the excitement of the view beyond. Here is Spencer's "stately Severn", the boundary of old between Saxons and Celts, snaking down to the sea in sweeping arcs of reflected light.

This is the place to breathe free air, to shed stress and to contemplate, as poets such as Leonard Clarke have done.

"The great strong bow of Severn winding out to sea"

And Gloucester tower four square and shining in the Cotswold sky"

For John Masfield — who lived a few miles away when he was a child — the trees were a powerful image. "The grown-up observer knew that the ploughman, the plough and the team were distant trees but the child thought that they were real ploughing figures..."

What if those figures were to come down and command men to do their bidding and bear a hand at ploughing the hill? Some of the trees on May Hill were probably here before the royal plantation, now grown to 80 feet and more. Others will follow. For more were planted to provide a permanent mark for our own Queen's silver jubilee, followed by a tree tribute to the Queen Mother on her 80th birthday. So the pimple will not be denuded as the millennium calls. Continuity, the essence of the countryside, remains in place.

Slimy, slippery and still alive

Last month 300 guests sat down with the Mayor of Colchester to enact a ritual dating back to the reign of Charles II. The Oyster Feast used to take place on the eve of St Denis's Fair, launching an eight-day celebration paid for by public funds. The Municipal Reform Act of 1835 put paid to such junkies — but the Oyster Feast survived as the Mayor's private party.

Royalty sometimes attend, as do politicians, but the burghers of Colchester have to make do with applying for tickets in a lottery and stumping up £35 if they are successful.

Oysters have a long history in Britain's oldest recorded town. The Romans caught them and sold them throughout the empire, even building roads out of their crushed shells. Much later they became known as the food of the poor, collected free by local people from the Colne Estuary. Only recently have Colchester oysters become a delicacy, served in London's best restaurants at expensive prices and famed as

'Once the chemical was banned, we noticed more birds, feeding on shellfish'

much for their aphrodisiac as for their digestive qualities.

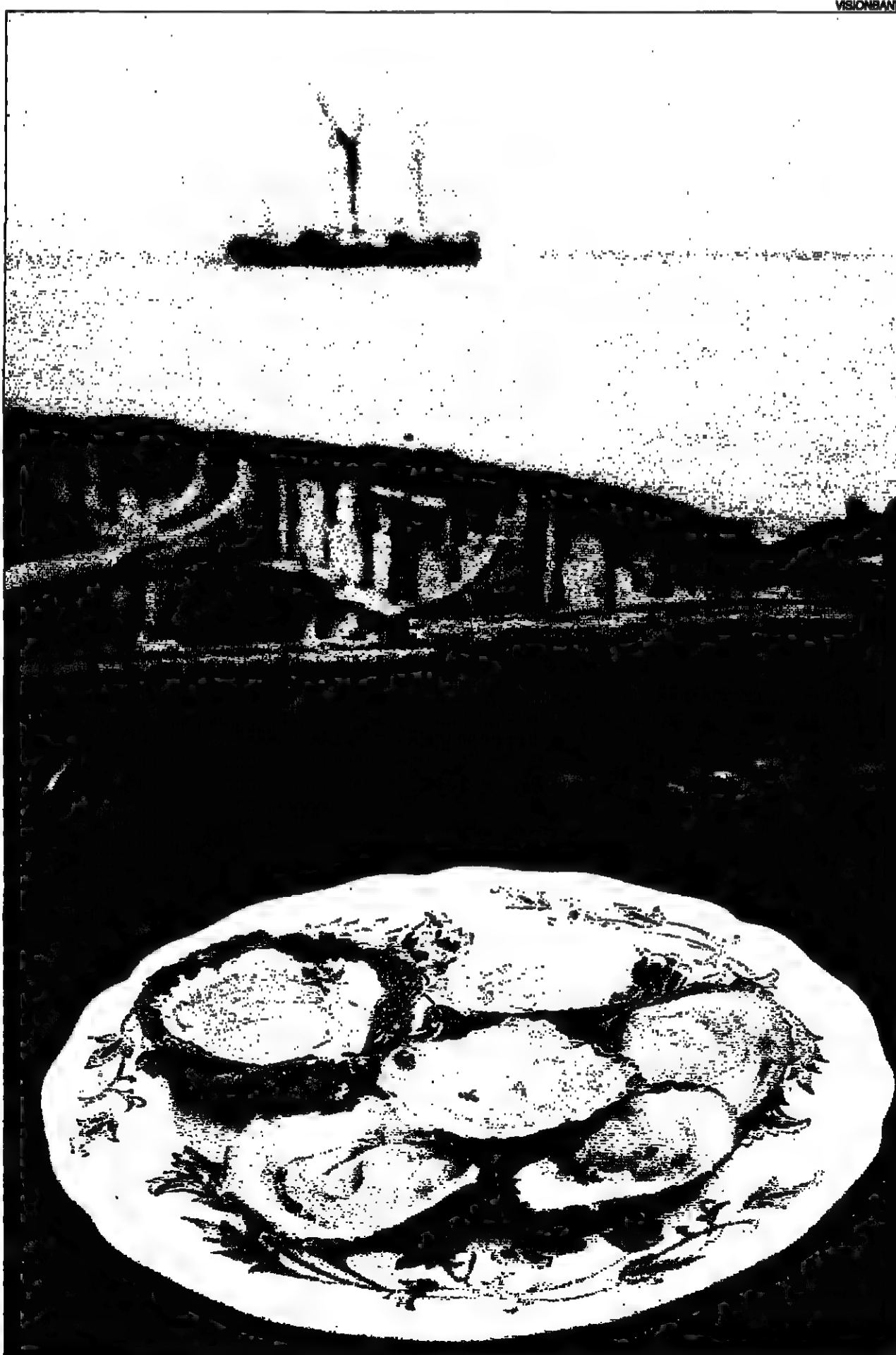
In the first half of the last century, oysters were available in profusion in Britain. But their numbers declined dramatically, mostly because of overfishing. The introduction of American oysters as a result — 120 million a year were imported by the turn of the century — also brought pests such as limpets, which competed for food with oysters and hastened their decline.

But native oysters are once again spawning around Mersea Island, which can be reached from Colchester across The Strood, an ancient causeway.

They can be harvested only when there is an "F" in the month: September, 1 in Colchester is like the Glorious Twelfth in the Highlands. Four thousand oysters were sold on the opening day of the season this year, and the mayor took the boat out for a ceremonial dredge. The catalyst for the recent recovery was the European Union ban on TBT, a chemical applied to the bottom of fishing boats to repel weeds. Since the practice ended in the late 1980s, native oysters have returned.

Richard Haward, a fisherman, says: "Once TBT was banned, we started to notice more birds on the mud, feeding on shellfish — as well as porpoises and cormorants that we hadn't seen for years. You don't really notice them dying out until they come back."

Ten years ago, Colchester oysters were imported from the south coast and relaid; now locally spawned oysters are on sale again at last, having taken five years to reach market size.



Oysters at Colchester: 4,000 were sold on the opening day of this year's harvest, after the mayor's ritual "dredge"

Mr Haward learnt oyster-culture at the age of 13 from his father, and has been farming and fishing for oysters virtually ever since. He has customers in London, Paris and Hong Kong. "You really need to eat them within three or four days," he told me as we headed out to the oyster beds. "And once they are opened, they will die very quickly."

This is a reminder, if one were needed, of the reason why some of us will never eat an oyster: they are best slurped down raw, with just lemon juice, black pepper and brown bread.

Bake them, steam them, make them into soup if you will — they are even put into beer barrels to improve the

flavour — but slimy, slippery and still alive is the classic style.

In the vaults of Colchester Castle, I came across an oyster shell set into the foundations of a Roman temple. Dick Barton, our guide, suggested: "I expect it was thrown into the mixing pit by a labourer finishing his lunch. In 2,000 years' time, they'll probably find Coke cans in the ruins of cement buildings."

This was the site of the Temple of Claudius, the centre of Roman worship in Britain, built to honour the man-god who overthrew Cymbeline and captured the town. The temple was sacked by Queen Boadicea, in revenge for the rape of her daughters, and

30,000 Romans were massacred. When the Romans rebok Camulodunum, they built Britain's first town walls, long sections of which survive.

The Normans built their biggest ever castle on the temple ruins. But when this too fell into disrepair it was bought for £100 by a local ironmonger. While taking down the stone to sell, he accidentally smashed open the floor to reveal the Roman origins. The castle was later given to the local MP by his mother-in-law as a wedding present; his wife owned the adjoining mansion and it was thought fashionable to have a ruin in the garden.

Nowadays, it is a boisterous and highly imaginative museum, admired by some and despised by others for replacing glass cases with interactive displays. You can try on a toga or a slave's chains, watch videos and listen to the last words of Roman soldiers about to be slaughtered by Boadicea's army.

For a very different atmosphere, visit the Clock Museum, a collection of beautiful Colchester clocks from the 18th and 19th centuries in a 15th-century timber-framed house. It is an oasis of peace, yards from a busy shopping centre.

Clockmaking was probably brought to Colchester by Dutch refugees, cloth merchants who settled in the town

in the 16th century. The Dutch Quarter, several streets of tall, overhanging houses on a hill behind the High Street, is a pleasant place for a stroll. Near here is the Victorian Town Hall, topped by a statue of Saint Helena, Colchester's patron and daughter of Old King Cole and mother of Constantine the Great. It's a cheat, really — the statue was converted from an existing statue of the Virgin.

So, after all this, what did I think of the oysters? I have a confession to make: I didn't have any. I tried them once in France and decided once was enough. But, please don't let that put you off.

TONY KELLY

Colchester

Where to stay: Red Lion Hotel, High Street (0206 577986), 15th-century timber-framed building in the centre, double B&B £60. The Rose and Crown, East Street (0206 866677), claims to be Colchester's oldest inn; double B&B £58.

What to see: Castle Museum, open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, also Sun 2-5pm, until end of Nov; £2.50, children £1.50, under-fives free. Guided tour of vaults and roof; adults £1, children 50p. Clock Museum, open Tue-Sat 10am-5pm (closed in winter).

Where to eat: Red Lion Hotel (above), three-course dinner £13.95, good à la carte menu, bistrot lunches £4-6.50, Champagne Charlies, High Street



Mayor Mary Fairhead at last month's feast

(0206 369372), three-course lunch/dinner £9.95 including half-bottle of house wine. Statters include oysters.

The Stockwell Arms in the Dutch Quarter is popular with walkers and cyclists and serves lunches for £2.50.

The Company Shed, Coast Road, West Mersea (0206 382700). Open 9am-5pm, closed Mon; oysters 50p-£1.25 each. Bring bread and wine.

How to get to the Oyster Feast: for next year's Feast (Friday, October 25), write to the Mayor's Secretary, Colchester Borough Council, Colchester CO1 1FR by Sept. About 20 places are available to the public by lottery, but preference given to Colchester residents. Cost: £35.

After dark in a haunted palace



Hampton Court Palace: strange sounds in the night?

If you walk at night through Henry VIII's state apartments at Hampton Court Palace, your lantern casting nervous shadows on the walls, there are moments when you can almost hear the screams of the young Catherine Howard. Timothy Rice writes.

There, in front of you, is the door where Henry's fifth wife pounded frantically to get an audience with her husband. Having discovered her infidelity, he had no intention of answering her knocking. She was dragged away in terror. On the anniversary of her execution, in February, people have felt a rush of wind in this haunted gallery.

Lantern-lit tours are new to the palace (see *The Times* reader offer below). And when you have been on one, through shadowy spaces where you imagine spectral figures emerging from dark corners, you wonder why they have not been introduced before.

You are met by a huge log fire in the Great Kitchen, with hefty pies and plates of carp in the candle-light. But this is only for show. Canapés and wine arrive. Our guide, dressed as an attendant to one of the queen's gentlewomen, leads us on the 45-minute tour up unadorned stone stairs (for servants) to the apartments.

The first stop is Henry VIII's Great Hall, hung with the Flemish tapestries the king commissioned in the late 1520s but used mainly as a dining room for less important members of the court. Here 600 men ate two meals a day in two sittings and slept under the carved hammer-beam roof. For those wanting to feel themselves back in those

times, discussion can turn to how important it would have been to clean the hall, bearing in mind the bodily requirements of 600 men. The fire was at one end. The knights slept near it; those of lower rank shivered further off.

Next door is the Great Watching Chamber, where the king's bodyguard watched over his safety. The original gold ceiling glimmers in the lantern light and four centuries ago the carved panelling would also have been gilded to spectacular candlelit effect. Then, in the haunted gallery, our guide takes the opportunity to describe the death of the king and the gruesome story of how his ulcerous body, taken from Whitehall towards Windsor, lay for a night at Syon and burst in its lead coffin. More details would not be appropriate for breakfast-time reading.

The "Hampton Court After Dark" tour continues past the Holy Day closets, used for royal worship, and ends at the spectacular Royal Chapel. While in daylight the rich blue of the ceiling — the most important Tudor example in the country — is magnificent, the effect at night is equally beguiling. The blue has turned a deeper shade against which stars shimmer and the gilded wood glimmers.

From the same spot where Henry VIII himself would have stood, you look down on the chapel from the royal pew, with the great oak reredos — carved by Grinling Gibbons in Anne's reign — on the far wall. As you descend the stone steps at the end of the tour, that final scene glows powerfully in the mind's eye.

READERS' OFFER: LANTERN TOURS

TIMES readers are invited, exclusively, on the first ever lantern-lit tours of Hampton Court Palace, on December 6, 13 and 20 at 6.30pm and 6.45pm. Tickets cost £15, which includes wine, soft drinks and canapés served in the Great Kitchen, followed by the state apartment tour and a guide book to keep as a memento. Afterwards, the palace shop will be open and visitors are offered a 10 per cent discount on all goods. The Chapel Royal choir will be in the shop to sing to the visitors. There will be two tours each evening and a maximum of 50 people on each tour (100 people a night).

To apply for tickets:

Either (a) phone 0181-781 9675 (ask for Hannah or Catherine) and pay by credit card. This line is open on weekdays 9am-5pm, and this weekend (Nov 25, 26) from 10am-5pm.

Or (b) write — enclosing a cheque made payable to Hampton Court Palace — to Hampton Court Palace After Dark, Apartment 44, Hampton Court Palace, East Molesey, Surrey KT8 9AU.

The palace shops are open on tour days from 9.30am-8.30pm and ticket-holders may shop before the tour if they wish.

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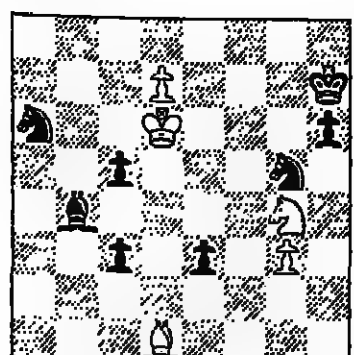
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CHESS

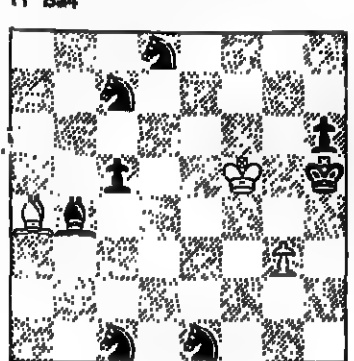
by Raymond Keene

I PUBLISHED the following study on August 12.



The composer of the study is unknown, but it is fiendishly difficult. White has to play and win.

Here is the solution:

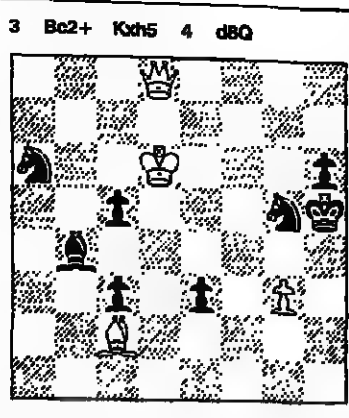


and now checkmate by the white bishop, coming to d1, cannot be avoided.

This solution, with the extraordinary underpromotion to a knight of two of the black pawns, was submitted by Bill Stirling of Essex, J. Gill of Surrey, and Anthony Chanter of Henley-on-Thames.

However, there is a problem with the study. After the moves

1 Nf6+ Kg7 2 Nh5+ Kg8



Black does not need to co-operate by forking White's king and queen. Instead he can try 4... Kg4, which leads to a very unclear position, e.g. 5 Qc8+ Kxg3 6 Qxa6 c4+ 7 Kd5 e2.

This is just a sample variation, but even analysis by computers has so far failed to find a clear-cut win for White after 4... Kg4.

I learnt of this possibility from the Grandmaster James Plaskett, the former British champion, and I believe that this is the first time that this radical flaw in the study has been pointed out in print.

Meanwhile, copies of *Secrets of Spectacular Chess* by Jon Levitt and David Friedgood (Batsford) are being sent to the three *Times* readers who submitted the main line analysis given above.

The full line-up for the Hastings Centenary Premier tournament, December 28 to January 6, has been announced. It is an all-grandmaster tournament, and the strongest all-play-all to have been held in Britain for several years.

The players will include Alexander Khalifman (Russia); last year's winner, Thomas Luther from Germany; the British champion Matthew Sadler and the Grandmasters Julian Hodgson, Tony Miles and Jon Speelman.

If you wish to attend or to enter one of the subsidiary tournaments, please contact Pam Thomas on 01434 445348.

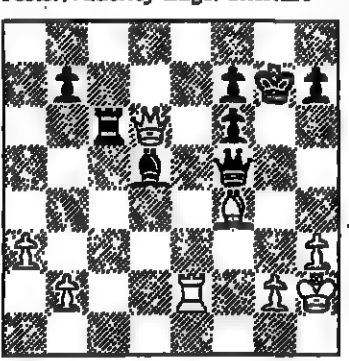
WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

This position is from the game Below - Ossatchuk, USSR 1965. Can White do better than retreating his attacked queen?

Send your answers on a postcard to The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. The first three correct answers drawn on Thursday will win a British Chess Magazine publication. The answer will be published next Saturday.

Solution to last week's competition: 1... Rxa3+



READERS are invited to write an amusing caption for the cartoon, right. The cartoon, from the Punch library, includes the contemporary caption.

The cartoon will be printed again next week on the Games page with a caption selected from those submitted.

Send caption suggestions on a postcard with your name and address to: Cartoon caption 84, Weekend Games Page, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN.

The editor's decision is final.

The closing date for entries is Wednesday, November 29.



The winning caption for last week's cartoon (above) was submitted by P. Cunningham of Southend-on-Sea.

PUNCHLINE



The winning caption for last week's cartoon (above) was submitted by P. Cunningham of Southend-on-Sea.

WORD-WATCHING

by Philip Howard

- SLEAZO**
a. Something pornographic
b. A cartoon clown
c. Page 3 in a newspaper
- TAMWORTH**
a. Hypocrisy
b. A red pig
c. A floppy cap
- VENDEUSE**
a. The wine harvest
b. French Revolutionary month
c. A frock flogger
- TEBETH**
a. A semi-housetrained polecat
b. A fast
c. A winter month

Answers, page 19

COMPUTER GAMES



NOW THAT the fire-works have passed, there is an explosion of creativity in the air, with many multimedia studios letting you make your own animated pictures and mini-movies. One of the first from the current wave is Viacom's PC CD-Rom, *Director's Lab*.

Suitable for all ages, the studio allows you to hone artistic skills in several suites. You can play around in the video suite, editing together hundreds of stored video clips, or make your own footage. In the music studio, you dabble with scores to bring video creations to life, and sound effects (or your own voice) can be added. Finishing touches are made in the title editor and graphics suite.

This American import is great fun while the novelty lasts. Another title in the genre, to be released imminently here, is *Broderbund's Kids Pix Studio* on CD-Rom. This seems easier to use and, overall, is the more colourful affair.

"My name is Forrest Gump. People call me Forrest Gump."

explains Forrest Gump in the movie *Forrest Gump*. We turn to him now in *Cyberspace Nineteen* — with a dozen double-CDs open to anyone aged 12 or over. The closing date is midnight on December 5 and the judges will not enter into additional correspondence.

Forrest is definitely one of the good guys. After all, any person who can refer to Apple Computers Inc as "some kind of fruit company" must know his onions. And that's all I have to say on that.

TIM WAPSHOTT

BRIDGE

by Robert Sheehan

THIS is a defensive problem from the round-robin phase of the recent Marlboro Bermuda Bowl. It came up in the match between Sweden (East-West) and China (North-South).

Dealer North North-South vul IMPs

AKQ92
K9742
A08
N 83
W 83
S 83
K1072

Pass 3NT Pass 3NT (1)

(1) Forcing, Contract: 3NT by South

South's 3NT was forcing, showing about 6-10 points; in addition, it was possible for him to have a long suit. During the auction East asked South about his Three Heart bid. South described it as "5+ good". (In international competitions, a screen runs diagonally across the table, and South and East were on the same side of the screen.)

The declarer took the five of clubs with the ace, and played a diamond, the queen. West following with the ten. He then played the ten of spades to the ace. Another diamond went to South's ace (East discarding the three of clubs), followed by another spade to the king. That left this position:

Q82
K97
Q8
N 83
W 83
S 83
K1072

The declarer then played the queen of spades. As East, can you tell what is going on? How would you plan your defence? Decide before reading on.

This was the complete deal:

AKQ92
K9742
A08
N 83
W 83
S 83
K1072
Q82
K97
Q8
N 83
W 83
S 83
K1072
Q82
K97
Q8
N 83
W 83
S 83
K1072

What happened at the table was that East, the Swedish player Mats Nilsson, discarded the eight of hearts on the queen of spades in the position shown in the second diagram, and threw another heart when the declarer continued with a fourth round of spades. Now the defence could only take two hearts and a club, and the declarer eventually made a second club trick. It should have been obvious to

East that the declarer did not have the ace of hearts. If he had that card, either he would have finessed clubs at trick three. His unimpaired-looking play of taking the ace of clubs on the first round must be because he is hoping to make five tricks in either spades or diamonds to get home in 3NT, and that he is nervous of hearts. Remember, by the time East had to make the decision on his first discard South had already shown up with A Q x of diamonds and 10 x of spades.

So what East should have done was to discard the jack of hearts on the queen of spades, and a diamond on the fourth spade, catering for his partner to hold either the jack of clubs or a heart holding at least as good as A 10 xx. As the cards lie the discard of the jack of hearts loses a trick in that suit, but the defence still make three hearts, a club and a spade.

You might think that after this performance Nilsson would want to put his cards back into the board hastily, and get on with the next hand. Not a bit of it — Nilsson called the tournament director and claimed that he was damaged by the "incomplete" explanation of South's suit requirements for his Three Hearts bid. The director ruled that the score stood. Normally if the director thinks there is any substance in a claim he will rule for the non-offending side, in this case East-West.

Not content with this, East-West appealed. This is the procedure if a pair don't agree with the director's ruling. The appellants have to put up a deposit, which is forfeited if the appeal is deemed to be without substance.

Before the Appeals committee, East said that "the understood South's explanation of his Three Hearts bid to mean that the suit had to be at least 5-cards in length, but must always be a good one. He therefore decided that South must hold at least Q 10 9 xx, and decided to discard his hearts to make as many tricks in the off suits on defence as possible, rather than playing for an 'impossible' set". (I am quoting the report of the Appeals committee.)

Quite why East claimed that he was "playing to cut down the overtricks" when on the putative hand he gave South the defence were always going to have four tricks anyway I don't know.

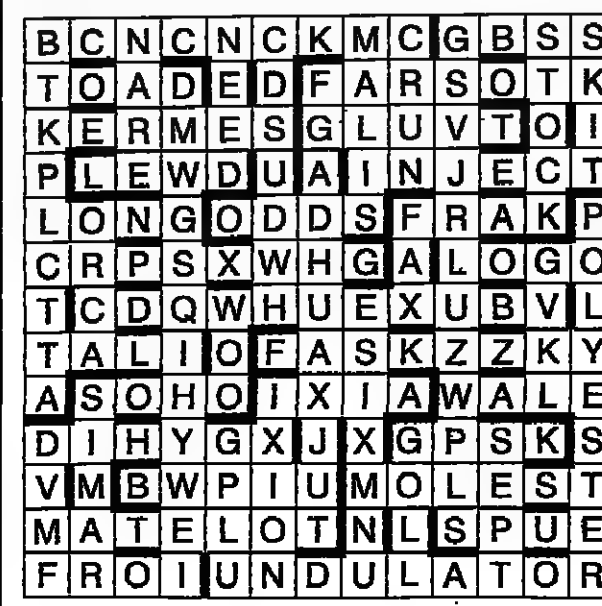
Where it all leaves a bad taste is that Nilsson defended incompetently and then tried, presumably with the concurrence of his captain, what looked suspiciously like a free shot that someone on the Appeals committee would be asleep. The committee ruled that, although South's explanation did fall short of full disclosure (I don't see it myself), East should have worked out how to defend the hand correctly, along the lines explained above. So the result stood. The committee was asleep on one point — they gave the Swedes their deposit back.

THE LISTENER CROSSWORD

No. 3333: Thirty-six by Law

THIRTY-SIX of the clues are of the Letters Latent type, from the answer to each clue one letter is to be removed, every time it occurs, before entry in the diagram. Definitions in these clues refer to the full answers; subsidiary indications are to the mutilated forms to be entered. An alternative form of the title (A, to be written below the grid) is to be treated similarly to form B, a noun de guerre assumed by a fictional character (to be found in another of his guises in the grid); the 36 letters omitted as above, taken in clue order, spell out the character's more common name, the book and the novelist (the chapter required should be evident). Further treatment of B yields C; it will be found that although the remaining clues are normal, B are to be entered as C, linearly arranged in A (thus providing a solution to a variant of an old type of puzzle). The superconfident solver may wish to demonstrate understanding of this by fulfilling the relevant clue, using a ruler an appropriate number of times, but this is not essential. Chambers (1993) is recommended.

- ACROSS**
1 Florid musical treatment has unusually fair outing
6 Butterflies to the city
11 Cwm? Aber? — Slan's not even Welsh!
12 One's after ants? Not half
13 The Italian restaurant's centre dish
14 "Methodism" — primarily, following trails?
15 Flying machines with no map — in some confusion!
18 Cricket club's about right for strong ale
19 Container for ministerial papers concerning swindle involving British vote
20 Head of school has small child lead choral work
21 See me, returning, take Australian News at Ten — it's improving
26 Unusually certain, connects focal positions
27 Made one essentially dead, without name and number
30 Obtained drugs, having timeless "street cred"
32 Was full of vitality about beginning of last month
34 Lines catching the little fishes
37 Outside firm's prosecuted, having flouted old usage
39 Naughty child's apprehended in charge of a tropical fish
40' Anxious about leaving trophies to last of line
- DOWN**
1 Cut roughly; break (into computer) (4)
2 Calm impudence (5)
3 Roman wisdom goddess (7)
4 Tear, pull off (6)
6 Antarctic bird (7)
7 Naval repair site (8)
8 Knock senseless (4)
13 Twist of hair on forehead (4-4)
15 Playhouse (7)
17 Bullfight horseman (7)
18 Smooth stone (6)
20 Pullulate (4)
22 Strait-laced person (5)
23 Slide; US down-and-outs' row (4)



- 41 See a setback in Spenser's welfare
42 Introduces in company consisting of unruly mass
43 Drunk? Exit! Right, left...
44 Deficiency on board — heartless captain told to go back
- DOWN**
1 Balanced statement of personal account following transactions
2 Water-colourist can freely represent merriment
3 Common intersection in past is sound
4 Lower ribs: a section's displayed
5 Dam up during excavation
6 Layers end up as milk-producers on farm!
7 Railway vehicle with hot and cold running water (not English)
8 Inflame old anger with short measure following starters
9 For instance, check for vehicle or engine
10 Times of blossoming in three US states to the south
11 Brightness one's found in a minut, perhaps
17 His irritation in Scottish coastal town is characteristic of youth
19 Salesman's to Bury? "No time!" he lamented
21 "Directed" describes me
22 Old sulphur compounds are explosive at present
24 Having been dragged in the past, the body's afraid to go outside
25 Camus is confused about one "English" soiree
26 Mouldy cheese found in drains
29 They've certain advantages, briefly, and dress extravagantly
31 Endless veneration, in short, is for the birds!
32 Stillness outbreaks, no less?
33 European's vacations's beginning with one month in Israel
35 Laid up? That's clumsy, lassie
36 Spot handcut — fellow's escaped!
38 Jock's to appear in court — it's commoner in company with *The Listener*!

Solution to No. 3330: Key Numbers by Le Gallois

Lights starting with musical key letters (A to G) are weighted by the numerical value of their key after the opening letter, eg box becomes bop.

Answers before alteration:

ACROSS: 1 Balalaika 7 Gull 12 Fulmine 14 Genom 20 Flue 22 Computed 25 Canterbury 29 Fumettes 33 Deduct 35 Gild 37 Bungs 41 Flie

DOWN: 1 Brinjarry 4 Caprate 6 Cork 7 Glockenspiel 11 Discomedusac 12 Pauxbourdon 20 Fur 24 Gode 27 Endship 33 Drib 34 Gien 35 Ghee

The winner is T.M. Crowther of Winchester. The runners-up are H. Martin of Caernarvon and John Minter of Telford.

No 636

- ACROSS**
1 Not mass-produced (8)
5 Weeding tool; vegetable (4)
9 Ducal headwear (7)
10 Restorative (5)
11 Precious, pricey (4)
12 A hundred years, runs (7)
14 Holder for arriving work (2-4)
16 No 1 batsman (6)
19 Regal authority symbol (7)
21 Cloak; headland (4)
24 Release fastening (5)
25 Sorry, you lost (3,4)
26 Drink sediment (4)
27 Get to know and like (person) (8)
- DOWN**
1 Cut roughly; break (into computer) (4)
2 Calm impudence (5)
3 Roman wisdom goddess (7)
4 Tear, pull off (6)
6 Antarctic bird (7)
7 Naval repair site (8)
8 Knock senseless (4)
13 Twist of hair on forehead (4-4)
15 Playhouse (7)
17 Bullfight horseman (7)
18 Smooth stone (6)
20 Pullulate (4)
22 Strait-laced person (5)
23 Slide; US down-and-outs' row (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 635

ACROSS: 1 Remark 5 Save 8 Wing 9 Ointment 10 Cherokee 11 Vamp 12 Step in 14 Perish 16 Cain 18 Class war 20 Apple-pie 21 Put 22 Racy 23 Survey

DOWN: 2 Epitaph 3 Anger 4 Knocking copy 5 Samovar 6 Venom 7 In deep waters 13 Penalty 15 Stumble 17 Alpha 19 Super

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LISTENER CROSSWORD No. 3333

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Coaker's lead helps team regain Times corporate golf title

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THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 25 1995



Sir Iain Vallance, left, the chairman, welcoming Peter Bonfield, head of ICL, the computer company, who is to be BT's new chief executive

BT splits top roles in radical board shake-up

BY ERIC REGULY

BRITISH TELECOM yesterday unveiled a radical board restructuring that splits the role of chairman and chief executive and sees the departure of Michael Hopper, the managing director who oversaw 75,000 redundancies.

The shake-up came only three days after Cable and Wireless, a rival, sacked its chairman and chief executive.

Sir Iain Vallance, 52, who has been both chairman and chief executive of BT for nine years, will step down as chief executive at the end of the year. The post will be filled by Peter Bonfield, currently

chairman and chief executive of ICL, Britain's biggest computer company.

Mr Hopper, 51, denied that he had been under pressure to resign and said he never expected to become chief executive. He added: "I'd like to stress that this is an amicable arrangement on both sides. I have probably one more interesting and big job left in me, and I'd like to do that sooner rather than later."

Paul Bosonnet, the deputy chairman, who is to be replaced by Sir Colin Marshall, a non-executive director, said Mr Hopper was leaving because "there was a parting of the ways". He would not elaborate.

Mr Hopper will not be replaced because the role of managing director is being eliminated. His salary of £430,000 will be paid until the end of his contract in August 1997. He has more than 400,000 share options, but is unlikely to earn much money

from them because the majority were granted at 400p. BT's shares have underperformed in recent months and closed Friday at 360½p, up 5½p.

Many of Mr Hopper's duties will be taken up by Mr Bonfield, who will be responsible for running the company and developing its strategy. His salary will be £475,000 a year and he will also be



Hopper: bowing out

entitled to an annual performance-related bonus of as much as 50 per cent of his salary, plus shares from the long-term incentive scheme.

Sir Iain said that as chairman he would have overall responsibility for the "reputation" of the group and would act as a "bridge" between the company and the board over matters of policy and strategy. His salary will remain at £480,000, but he will no longer be eligible for the bonus, or long-term incentive plans.

It appears that his desire to shed the chief executive's post is being done in preparation for his eventual departure. "There's no question of me leaving at this stage, but I don't want to spend my whole career at BT. The separation of the two roles will make it easier for me to go."

Under Mr Bonfield, a technology expert, BT is likely to evolve more quickly into a multimedia company as opposed to a pure phone company.

It will, as Sir Iain has said, attempt to become "a retailer of anything you can convert into digital form".

Mr Bonfield, 51, was approached in the spring about taking the chief executive's job at BT. He has an engineering degree from Loughborough University, started his career with Texas Instruments in the US, and joined ICL in 1981.

He became chairman and chief executive in 1985, five years before Fujitsu of Japan bought control of the company. Mr Bonfield made plans to return ICL to the stock market, but they have been delayed until 1997 or so.

He said he felt some "anger" about running a company that was so closely regulated. Relations between Don Cruickshank, the Director-General of Telecommunications, and BT are at an all-time low.

Mr Hopper is expected to become the chief executive of a large financial services company.

Fyffes in talks for Geest bananas

By COLIN NARBROUGH

FYFFES and Geest, the rival fruit importers, could merge their banana activities in response to aggressive price-cutting by supermarkets which has seen the price of bananas tumble.

Fyffes has formed a joint venture to acquire Geest's banana business, which imports up to 45 per cent of all bananas sold in Britain.

Industry sources are suggesting a purchase price of about £70 million.

Its partner in the joint venture is the development company for the Windward Islands, the traditional Caribbean source of Geest's bananas, which has suffered a bad run of tropical storms and hurricanes in recent years.

The announcement by Geest that it was engaged in discussions after receiving a "number of proposals" followed a formal denial earlier this month that the sale of its banana business was imminent. Less than two weeks ago, Geest shares dropped 23 per cent to 107p after a warning that this year's pre-tax profit would fall well short of last year's £12.8 million. Yesterday, the shares recovered 42p to 142p.

Earlier this month, Asda, the supermarket group, cut the price of bananas to just 19p per pound as the store wars intensified.

After the sale of its banana business, Geest would focus on chilled and prepared food operations, and the low-margin general produce business, which together could achieve a pre-tax profit of more than £10 million, analysts predicted.

With the outlook for bananas set to deteriorate further as the European market is opened to lower-cost, non-Caribbean fruit, Geest is seeking to reduce the threat which volatile trading in bananas poses to its diversification strategy.

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Next stop Bucharest. The emerging markets bandwagon

BUSINESS TODAY

FT-SE 100	3624.0	(+21.5)
Yield	5.95%	
FT-SE All share	1772.52	(+8.44)
Nikkei	18215.23	(-24.61)
New York	8048.54	(+7.25)
Dow Jones	899.97	(+1.57)
S&P Composite		

Federal Funds	6%	(closed)
Long Bond	100%	
Yield	6.25%	
3-mth Interbank	6%	(92-94)
Life long gilt		
Future (Dec)	108%	(108-)

New York	1.5805	(closed)
London		
\$	1.5595	(1.5535)
DM	2.2108	(2.2104)
FFr	7.8005	(7.8100)
Sfr	1.7292	(1.7295)
Yen	198.25	(197.25)
S Index	83.0	(83.1)

London	1.4178	(closed)
DM	4.8760	
FFr	1.1623	
Sfr	101.50	
Yen	82.0	(82.8)
S Index		

Tokyo close Yen 100.85	
Brent 15-day (Feb)	\$16.55 (\$16.55)
London close	\$363.65 (\$362.85)

Amec bid

Amec, the construction company, has launched a £130 million takeover bid for the rival contractor Alfred McAlpine, as it prepares to do battle with Kvaerner, the Norwegian shipbuilding group, in defence of its own independence. Report 26, *Tempus* 28

First Choice cuts jobs and holidays as bookings flag

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

ONE of the UK's largest tour operators is shedding 300 jobs and cutting its package holidays by 7 per cent because of disappointing bookings for next year.

First Choice, which last month gave warning that full-year profits would be £15 million lower at about £1 million, said the job reductions were in response to "cautious" trading forecasts.

Malcolm Heald, the group finance director, is to leave and will be replaced by David Gill, currently finance director of Proudfoot.

The shares fell 18p to 70p after the profit warning. Yesterday they closed at 62p.

down. Analysts said Mr Gill, who formerly worked for Avis Europe and the BOC Group, seemed "a reasonable replacement" for Mr Heald, who is rumoured to have left because of a personality clash. Mr Heald has indicated, however, that he wishes to pursue a career outside the travel industry. He will stay on until January. Ken Smith, managing director of Air 2000 since November 1993, also joins the board.

The slump in holiday sales, estimated at 30 per cent overall, has also hit rivals Thomson and Airtrous. It follows a disastrous summer in which job insecurity made many

people reluctant to splash out and demand for foreign holidays evaporated in the heat wave.

Thomson, the largest holiday company, had already announced it was cutting summer 1996 capacity before First Choice said that it, too, was having a difficult time.

Francis Baron, First Choice chief executive, told the City in October it had been "the toughest summer on record". Yesterday he added: "This cautious approach will help to ensure that satisfactory returns can be made from summer 1996 even though volumes may be down on the previous year."

Shares sale nets JJB chief £1.8m

A DEFT turn on the stock market has netted David Whelan, footballer turned businessman, a tidy £1.8 million to add to his growing bank balance (Jon Ashworth writes).

The former Blackburn Rovers defender raised the money from the sale of shares in JJB Sports, his Wigan-based sports equipment retailer.

The money tops up the £13.5 million windfall he enjoyed when JJB came to the market a year ago. The funds will be put into his other business interests, mainly Wigan Football Club, which he owns and manages.

Mr Whelan sold 370,451 shares at 480p per share, raising nearly £1.8 million. He retains a holding of 10.83 million shares, representing 36.11 per cent of the share capital.

Bid for Forte may yield £69m fees

By MARTIN WALLER AND JON ASHWORTH

CITY underwriters backing the £3.4 billion bid by Granada Group for Forte, the hotels group, could receive a thumping commission of 2½ per cent for the job, giving potential total fees of some £44 million.

In addition, further straight fees of £25 million are on line for Granada's financial advisers. The underwriting fees are at the top end of usual earnings from a contested takeover.

Granada's defence document, rushed out yesterday, showed total fees to the three financial advisers underwriting the cash alternative to the cash-and-shares offer of 2 per cent, including a ½ per cent success fee. In addition, a further ½ of a

percentage point a week ticks up on the meter from day 31 of the bid, which will almost certainly run the full 60 days of the City takeover timetable.

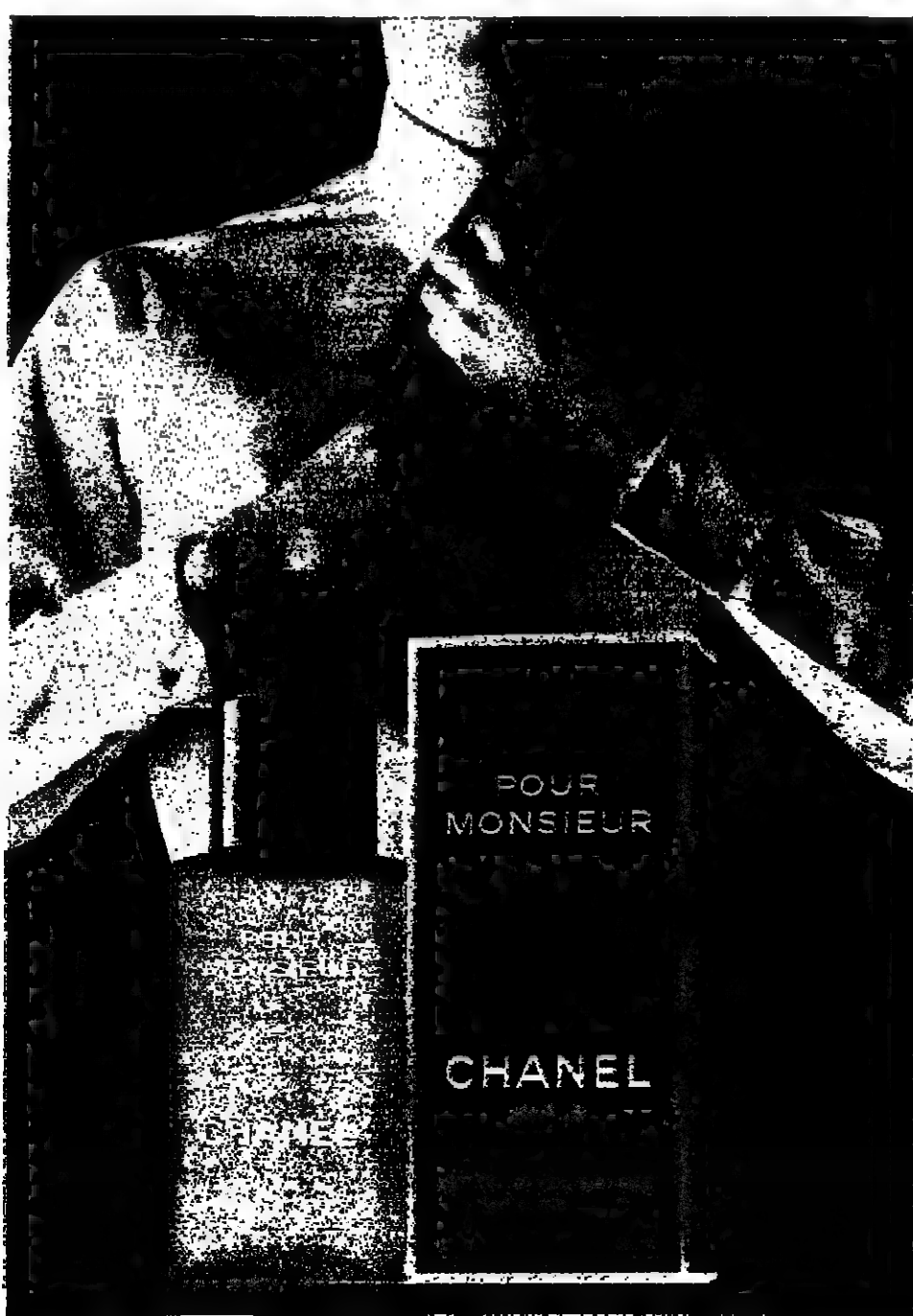
There is a full cash alternative to the offer, which, if accepted in total by Forte shareholders, will require the issue of shares worth £1.7 billion. The three underwriters are Lazard Brothers, BZW and Hoare Govett, with the last two sharing 85 per cent of the fees between them. A rival merchant banker said last night that standard underwriting fees in most hostile takeovers would have totalled 1½ per cent, with the extra ½ per cent kicking in after 40 days rather than 30 in the case of Granada.

The offer document itself pulls few punches. Over five years, Granada's share price has outperformed the FTA

all-share index by 156 per cent. Forte has underperformed by 40 per cent. £100 invested in Granada five years ago with dividends reinvested would have increased by £44, compared with an increase of just £30 for Forte.

Forte said Granada's critique was two-and-a-half years out of date. A spokesman said: "The document adds nothing to the debate and simply repeats what was said before. This is a clear attempt to capture Forte's assets on the cheap and to create a conglomerate which will have little industrial logic."

Forte has raised £875 million in the past two years from the disposal of non-core assets. Further sales worth £300 million are planned. Shareholders have until December 15 to respond to the document.



POUR MONSIEUR
ELEGANCE IS TIMELESS

CHANEL

Sir Rocco won't go quietly

There are, I suspect, lessons to be learnt by leaders of industry from the Princess of Wales's heart-to-heart with Martin Bashir on Monday night.

Might one not argue that the strange events in Cable & Wireless's boardroom would be better understood if Lord Young had flustered his eyelashes, tilted his head and bared his soul to the nation for 50 minutes? It is not beyond the realms of possibility that Lord Young might have divulged how marriage to James Ross, his once-upon-a-time chief executive, was a bit crowded, even though there were only two of them.

It is, I grant you, highly debatable whether Lord Young would have captured the 12.7 million audience enjoyed by the Prince of Wales's interview, let alone the 21 million that watched the Princess. But, with all to play for, we might, perchance, have enjoyed a not entirely dissimilar performance.

Martin Bashir: "Who was the enemy?"

Lord Young: "Well, the enemy

was Ross's department, because I always got more publicity, my work was more, was discussed much more than him. And, you know, from that point of view I understand it. But I was doing good things, and I wanted to do good things. I was never going to hurt anyone. I was never going to let anyone down."

MB: "There's a lot of discussion at the moment about how matters between yourself and the chief executive will be resolved. There's even the suggestion of a divorce between you. What are your thoughts about that?"

Lord Young: "Obviously we need clarity on a situation that has been of enormous discussion over the last three years in particular... I take some responsibility that our marriage went the way it did. I'll take half of it, but I won't take any more than that, because it takes two to get in this situation."

MB: "But you do bear some of the responsibility?"

Lord Young: "Absolutely. We both made mistakes."

In the event, clarity came on Tuesday when Cable & Wireless's non-executive directors, led by Winfried Bischoff, chairman of Schroders, delivered a Solomon-like judgment. Off with Young's and Ross's heads "with immediate effect". But might the outcome have been different if either of the executives had displayed a little of the Princess of Wales's candour? Come to think of it, not necessarily.

Then again, what of Granada's £3.3 billion takeover bid for Forte? Surely Gerry Robinson, Granada's chairman-designate, warranted a *Panorama* slot to explain to a startled business community why a company whose roots are steeped in television had suddenly decided that salvation lies in attempting to acquire the UK's largest hotel combine.

It is common practice in takeover bids — one of the City's tools for reshaping British industry — for the predator company soundly to trash the target company, so much so that a casual observer might wonder where the attraction



MELVYN MARCKUS

of such a purchase lies. Mr Robinson is clearly a firm believer in this approach.

Granada, whose 1994-95 results showed a 32 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £51 million on a turnover of £23.3 billion, argued that, in recent years, Forte has "failed to deliver adequate value" to shareholders. According to Granada, Forte's five-year summary shows an 11 per cent decline in

operating profits before exceptional items and a 41 per cent fall in earnings per share. Granada described its own performance as "impressive", a factor that was "a direct result of its clear strategic focus and strong financial disciplines". We also learnt about "the breadth and depth of Granada's management skills".

What is not pointed out is that the degree of synergy between the two companies is next to zilch. Granada currently operates a handful of budget hotels, representing 1,300 rooms, compared with Forte's international portfolio of 940 hotels and 600 restaurants. Where synergy exists, in motorway service areas, divestments loom.

What was required was a *Panorama* programme entitled "Back to the Eighties". Then, with suitably coy expressions, Mr Robinson could have put to viewers Granada's modestly worded proposals. Such as:

□ "Ensure that each of Forte's businesses meets Granada's test of producing a proper return."

□ "Rejuvenate the restaurant brands."

□ "Capitalise decisively on the Meridien brand."

As Robinson put it: "Forte is an ideal acquisition for Granada. It conforms to all our main acquisition criteria... It is of a worthwhile size and it offers significant scope for performance improvement."

The risk in making such statements is that someone, such as myself, might leap up and proclaim that Mr Robinson is suffering from the advanced stages of paranoia.

What is highly debatable, in spite of Mr Robinson's opinion of Granada's management skills, is whether the company possesses the ability to run a major hotel combine. As Forte pointed out yesterday: "Granada has little experience in running UK hotels and no experience as an international hotel operator."

As Forte puts it: "Much of Granada's growth is fuelled by acquisitions. Granada is now becoming an old-fashioned 1980s-

style acquisition machine lacking industrial logic. Where will it end?" A good question. Shares in Hanson, the ultimate takeover machine, currently yield close on 8 per cent — a sure sign that "diversified industrials", as the *Pink 'Un* now describes conglomerates, are not in vogue.

Should Sir Rocco Forte be interviewed by Mr Bashir, the exchange might be:

MB: "Can't we pack him off to somewhere quietly rather than campaign against him?"

Sir Rocco: "He won't go quietly, that's the problem. I'll fight to the end, because I believe that I have a role to fulfil. They hadn't expected that. And I'm a great believer that you should always confuse the enemy."

■ I erred last week in suggesting that, despite the National Lottery, off-track betting receipts had risen sharply this year. During the first eight months of 1995 receipts showed a decline of 0.92 per cent. My apologies to the bookmaking fraternity.

Amec bids for Alfred McAlpine

By Alasdair Murray

AMEC, the construction company, has launched a £130 million takeover bid for the rival contractor Alfred McAlpine, as it prepares to do battle with Kvaerner in defence of its own independence.

Amec's offer of two new shares for each McAlpine share received a lukewarm response from McAlpine's board. McAlpine said it was unable to decide what to recommend to shareholders until talks between Kvaerner and Amec were concluded.

McAlpine noted that the effect of the Kvaerner offer has been to increase Amec's share price by 21p, making it impossible to determine the real value of Amec's offer.

Kvaerner is considering an offer of 100p per ordinary share for Amec, making a total of £340 million if preference shares are included. Amec had dismissed the Norwegian company's terms as too low. On Thursday Kvaerner acquired a 10 per cent interest in

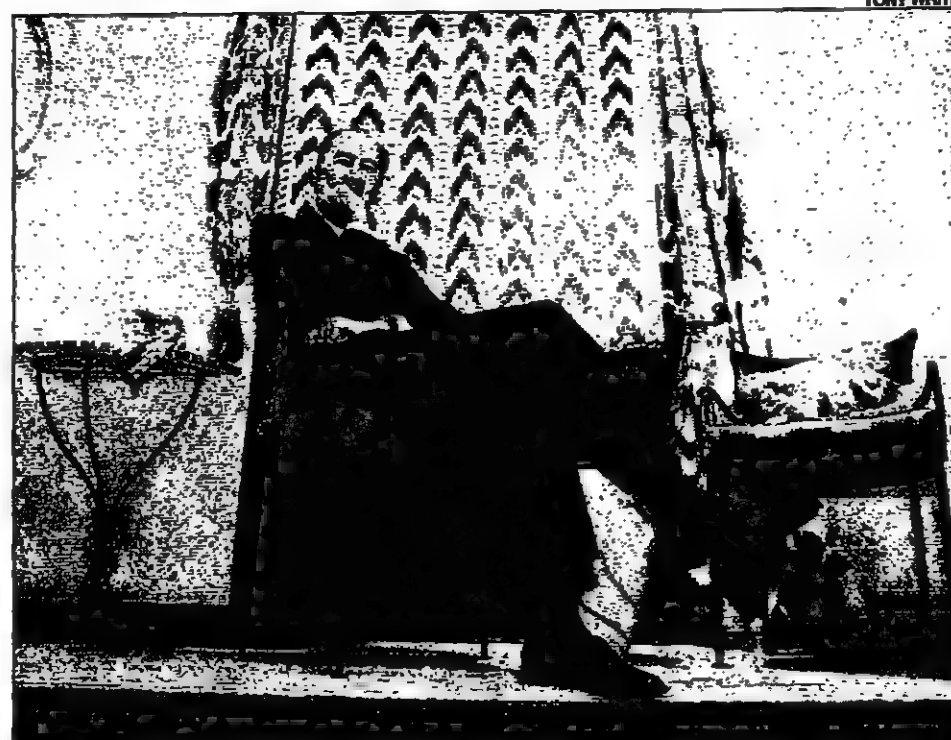
Amec through a dawn raid on the stock market.

Kvaerner was last night considering its position after the new developments and a further statement is expected early next week. Amec's share price was 3p lower at 96p yesterday but was still 18p higher than before Kvaerner's raid. McAlpine rose 19p to 159p.

Amec is believed to have been looking at McAlpine for a number of months and the two have bid for construction work together in the Government's private finance initiative.

City reaction to the bids was mixed, with many sceptical about the value of Amec's share swap bid but also uncertain whether Amec would be a suitable target for Kvaerner.

The major institutional shareholders in Amec are Phillips and Drew Fund Management with 14 per cent, Lazard Freres Asset Management with 3.1 per cent and the BBC Pension Trust with 3.2 per cent. *Tempus*, page 28



Sir Peter Osborne at Osborne & Little's King's Road showroom in London

Osborne & Little prospers abroad

OSBORNE & LITTLE, the designer and distributor of furnishing fabrics and wallpapers, relies on its substantial overseas business to offset the effects of a flat domestic market and to lift pre-tax profits to £1.69 million, from £1.5 million, in the half-year to

September 30 (Martin Barrow writes). The company, which achieves three-fifths of its sales overseas, saw turnover in North America overtake Britain for the first time, with California emerging as an important market. UK sales rose by just 1 per cent.

Sir Peter Osborne, chairman, said that the results were encouraging, given the difficult markets in which the company operates. The interim dividend is lifted to 4.5p a share, from 3.5p, and is payable on January 24. The shares fell by 5p, to 400p.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Norwich sells back Virgin Direct stake

NORWICH UNION has sold its 50 per cent stake in Virgin Direct, Richard Branson's direct-selling financial services operation, back to the Virgin Group after just eight months. Both sides said they had decided by mutual agreement to develop separate direct selling businesses.

Virgin Direct is joining forces with Australian Mutual Provident to expand its operations in the UK and overseas. It will start selling life assurance and pension policies directly to customers early next year. Norwich Union will press ahead with plans to start Norwich Union Direct, which will sell motor and household insurance directly to customers over the telephone from January, and unit trusts and personal equity plans during 1996. Virgin Direct was launched in March this year. Its first product, a personal equity plan that tracked the performance of the FT-SE all-share index, has brought in almost £100 million from 25,000 investors.

St James's setback

ST JAMES'S Place Capital, the financial services group headed by Sir Mark Weinberg and Lord Rothschild, suffered a £1.1 million fall in first half profits to £15.4 million in the six months to September 30. The figures were hit by a downturn in new business at J Rothschild Assurance, where sales of single premium investment bonds have fallen sharply. However, the firm increased sales of new regular premiums and lifted market share. J Rothschild Assurance funds under management increased from £1 billion to £1.25 billion. The interim is held at 1.5p, due on December 22.

Budget housing plea

THERE IS "little chance" of a Budget aiding the housing market because the Government has lost interest in housing and would rather win votes by cutting taxes, UBS, the broker, said in a report. Bringing main residences into the capital-gains-tax system, an option UBS proposes, could help improve the housing market but was unlikely to be implemented. It said abolition of the 1 per cent stamp duty charge paid by house purchasers on properties above £60,000 "hangs in the balance" yet could stimulate the market for a cost only £250 million.

Lambert may buy agent

LAMBERT SMITH HAMPTON, the surveying firm, is negotiating a reverse takeover of Herring Baker Harris, the quoted estate agent, which in May issued shares for 18.5 per cent of itself to its landlord, Friends Provident, for a cut in rent on its Mayfair headquarters. Herring shares were suspended yesterday at 10.45p. Lambert indicated that heads of agreement have been approved. No details will be issued until completion of due diligence. The merged property agency would be named Lambert Smith Hampton. A takeover would mean Lambert has shelved flotation plans. *Tempus*, page 28

Lowndes chief dies

RICHARD SHAW, chairman of Lowndes Lambert Group, the insurance broker, has died from a heart attack, aged 59. He had led the group since 1979. William Wilks, finance director, said his death was desperately sad. He added: "Richard was a very colourful character and a fine businessman." Sir Robert Clark, deputy chairman, will act as chairman of the board. David Margrett, group managing director, will become chairman of the executive committee. Mr Shaw had a passion for golf and steeplechasing. His horse Halo Dandy, for which he paid £20,000, won the 1984 Grand National.

Amberley acquisition

AMBERLEY GROUP, which makes and distributes specialty minerals and chemicals, is buying Bousfield Printing, based in Bristol, for £9.52 million. Bousfield, which makes and distributes inks, coatings and printing consumables, earned pre-tax profits of £1.4 million on turnover of £18.4 million in the year to March 31. Amberley is funding the deal through a placing and open offer of new shares at 61p. Existing shares rose 5p to 70p yesterday. Amberley reported a rise in interim pre-tax profits to £920,000 (£552,000). Earnings were 1.39p a share (1.16p). The interim dividend rises to 0.3p (0.25p), due on February 21.

Price rule holds back Seeboard

By Martin Waller

TIGHTER prices imposed in spring on the electricity industry by the regulator trimmed profits of Seeboard, the first of the regional electricity companies in England and Wales to report interim figures covering the summer.

Since then, Professor Stephen Littlechild has again tightened price caps on the companies' core distribution businesses, but this has not prevented a wave of bids in the sector. Seeboard is awaiting the result of an agreed 635p-a-share offer from South West Corporation, of the US.

Seeboard operating profits fell from £40.1 million to £38.5 million in the half-year to September 30, in part because of a £10 million hit from the new price controls, although these were offset by lower operating costs after job cuts.

Non-repetition of one-off items allowed pre-tax profit of £39.4 million (£33.5 million).

No interim dividend is paid, because of the bid, which may be sent for monopolies review.

LCI profits lifted by high rollers

By Martin Barrow

A RETURN of the high rollers to the capital lifted trading at London Clubs International, the casinos operator, to record levels in the first half to September. Pre-tax profits rose to £19.3 million from £16.3 million and the company is confident of a strong second half.

Sir Timothy Kitson, chairman, said: "We remain confident that the conditions which present an attractive environment for overseas visitors in London will prevail and the outlook for our casinos in the capital therefore remains good."

"London Clubs' burgeoning overseas operations had mixed fortunes. In Egypt high attendances encouraged enlargement of the casino at Tabu, which became fully operational this week. But at the Carlton casino in Cannes summer trading was depressed by the strong franc. The interim is increased to 5p (4.25p), due January 31. Profits rose 17.7p (16.5p). *Tempus*, page 28

Welsh Water sees profits climb 63%

By Alasdair Murray

WELSH WATER has announced a 63 per cent rise in half-year profits, to £80.6 million, and confirmed that it will be holding discussions with South Wales Electricity, its bid target, on Wednesday.

Talks between Welsh and Swalec have been repeatedly rescheduled since Welsh first admitted it was considering a bid for Swalec earlier this month. Yesterday, however, Graham Hawker, Welsh's chief executive, said: "We will definitely be meeting with Swalec on Wednesday, after the Budget."

Welsh's performance was helped by a big drop in exceptional items and an improved performance from its non-regulatory businesses, which returned a profit of £3.7 million, up from £0.6 million. Turnover was up by 3.7 per

cent, to £269.5 million, and profits excluding exceptional items rose by 3.5 per cent.

Welsh said that restructuring of Acer, its troubled engineering consultancy, is substantially complete. Acer, which has cost Welsh more than £50 million in write-offs since it was bought for £21 million in 1992, made a profit of £0.1 million, against a £2.8 million loss last year.

Welsh Water International, which bought a 33 per cent stake in a privatised Czech water company earlier this year, broke even after making a £0.5 million loss last year.

Welsh Water is to pay a dividend of 12.6p, up from 9.3p, on 31 January. The shares closed down 3.5p, at 700.5p.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank	Bank
	Buy	Sell
Australia \$	2.22	2.06
Austria Sch	13.26	13.06
Belgium Fr	48.44	44.14
Canada \$	2.22	2.06
Cyprus Cyp	0.743	0.698
Denmark Kr	9.18	8.38
Finland Mk	7.17	6.52
France Fr	5.03	4.78
Germany DM	2.27	2.16
Greece Dr	360.80	365.80
Hong Kong \$	12.73	11.73
India Ru	1.62	0.94
Israel Shk	6.1900	4.5000
Italy Lit	2895.00	2640.00
Japan Yen	172.30	156.30
Malta	0.580	0.535
Netherlands Gld	2.898	2.788
New Zealand \$	2.54	2.32
Norway Kr	10.55	9.58
Portugal Esc	242.50	224.00
S Africa Rd	rel.	5.38
Spain Ptas	166.60	153.50
Sweden Kr	10.85	10.05
Switzerland Fr	1.82	1.74
Turkey Lira	rel.	7800.0
USA \$	1.600	1.530

Notes: For travel documentation bank rates only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

ROBBO vs ROCCO

Gerry Robinson is going to know he has been in a fight, and a pretty rough one the way things are looking...

Sir Rocco Forte on Granada's hostile bid for the family hotel empire — *Business Times* tomorrow

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السنة من الاصل

A WORKING WEEK FOR: DEREK LOVELOCK

Fashioning a career in the clothes industry

Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday

HE IS not your typical man. Derek Lovelock doesn't spend weekends tinkering with the car, repointing brickwork, or doing the garden. He goes shopping. And peculiarly, it's women's wear shops he frequents the most.

Lovelock is a self-confessed clothes junkie. A necessary condition given his position as managing director of Sears Womenswear, the fashion retailer trading from 650 outlets under the names of Miss Selfridge, Warehouse, Wallis and Richard Shops.

"I'm a great husband. I like going shopping with my wife," he says. Few men can claim to relish the prospect of fighting their way through the ranks of Saturday shoppers, but Lovelock says most weekends he can be spotted trawling Britain's high streets and shopping malls.

His trips are not limited to his own group's stores, as part of his job is keeping close tabs on the competition. But, he says, while looking at rivals' wares is okay, he actively discourages his wife from parting with cash to rival retailers.

"There are certain shops I really don't like her bringing things back from. She does on occasions and tends not to tell me, but I've been around long enough to spot where clothes have come from most of the time."

"And when that happens I say: 'How could you? That is a competitor,'" he says. His remarks are made with a large dollop of good humour, a characteristic that pervades his whole manner. Sitting in his office in Hendon, northwest London, where the walls are covered in designs of hoped-for fashions, Lovelock doesn't look like a fashion victim.

Dressed in a sombre grey suit and dark blue shirt and tie, Lovelock, aged 45, could easily be confused for a number-cruncher or civil servant. Once he starts speaking, the mistake is quickly revealed.

His talk is of hipsters, animal prints and jewel-encrusted camisoles. Hardly surprising, given that Lovelock has spent 25 years in the rag trade.

His first job in the industry was as a management trainee with C&A, where he stayed for 12 years before moving on to Storehouse, the BHS and Mothercare retail

Sarah Bagnall finds that being a self-confessed clothes junkie is vital for the head of Sears Womenswear

group that at the time also owned Richard Shops.

Initially, the buying and merchandising controller for Richard Shops, he became the brand's chief executive in 1987. Three years later, he took over the reins of Mothercare and became a member of the Storehouse board. The departure of Sir Terence Conran, the creator of Storehouse, in 1990 set in motion a revolving boardroom door with Lovelock being among the first to go. He next set up shop at Sears, the sprawling retail group that owns Selfridges, Freemans, British Shoe and Olympus Sport, and has been ensconced there ever since. Given his background in buying and merchandising, most of Lovelock's time is spent dealing with the product.

As Lovelock puts it: "The product side is the drug. There is such a kick of getting it right but there is another sort of kick when you get

tion, such as if British Shoe had a very good week and we didn't. Then we can try to find out why not?" he says.

As a follow-up to the weekly conference call, Lovelock has a communications meeting on Tuesday mornings. Every other week, it is the turn of the product meeting at which each brand hears what the worst and bestsellers were for all the other brands in the previous week. "That's the best bit of my week, particularly hearing the bestsellers for Miss Selfridge."

"They are the most fun and the most instant and always the most interesting because Miss Selfridge is the highest-risk brand and, therefore, the most volatile and the hardest to understand but the most stimulating to work out," he says.

Fashion is well known for being a fickle business where tastes can swing sharply in a

Unlike most men, he relishes the prospect of fighting his way through the ranks of shoppers

it wrong. I suppose it's a kick either way."

Lovelock commutes to work from his home in Buckinghamshire, where he lives with his wife, Deborah, and children Robert, 14, and Bryony, 10. He normally reaches the office at 7.30am because "I'm a morning person. I tend to fade as the day goes on."

The first hour of the day tends to be the calm before the storm and a time when Lovelock says he is most productive. "Getting in a bit earlier than most other people gives me a chance to read. It's my time," he says.

The first fixed item of the week is Monday's 9am conference call with the myriad Sears businesses.

Each managing director, together with some of their staff, gather round their squawk boxes in order to discuss the previous week's trading with Liam Strong, chief executive of Sears. "It's an information-gathering exercise for Liam. It also enables us to compare notes and share informa-

tion, such as if British Shoe had a very good week and we didn't. Then we can try to find out why not?" he says.

The more fashionable the business is, the shorter time span that either one of these occurs. Miss Selfridge can turn very quickly and it's a matter of keeping on top of it all the time. You think the future is in volume basics and suddenly the public don't want basics as something else is fashionable.

"That can happen over one or two weeks. That aspect of the industry will never go away. It comes down to how you manage it," he says.

This is the job of Lovelock and his team. Trying to get the right balance between fashionability and risk. "It's like a set of balances which, historically, in the retail trade you veer one way and then redress the balance by veering the other way."

The Miss Selfridge bestsellers last week were a light, stretch satin shirt worn with the hipster,

boot-cut flared trousers. Lovelock says: "That is THE look at the moment. That is the blouse to have. We have bestselling hipsters, bestselling boot-cut flares, but the best seller is the hipster, boot-cut flares."

Richard Shops is also selling satin shirts like hot cakes, but, reflecting the more mature age of the average shopper there, the shirt is less stretchy and less tight.

At the other end of the spectrum are the slow sellers — namely jewel-encrusted camisoles and dresses, an experience Lovelock says they are still trying to get to grips with. One aim of the meetings is to promote a cross-fertilisation of ideas and experiences between the brands.

"For example, we have Warehouse, which is a slightly older brand and gets its fashion more from the catwalk, and we have Miss Selfridge, where the fashion comes up from the street. Sometimes we have situations where Warehouse is ahead of the game and getting the right consumer reactions which Miss Selfridge can pick up on in the meetings and sometimes it's the other way round," argues Lovelock.

His least favourite part of the week is the time spent in the car stuck on the Finchley Road between his office in Hendon and the head office of Sears in Duke Street in the West End.

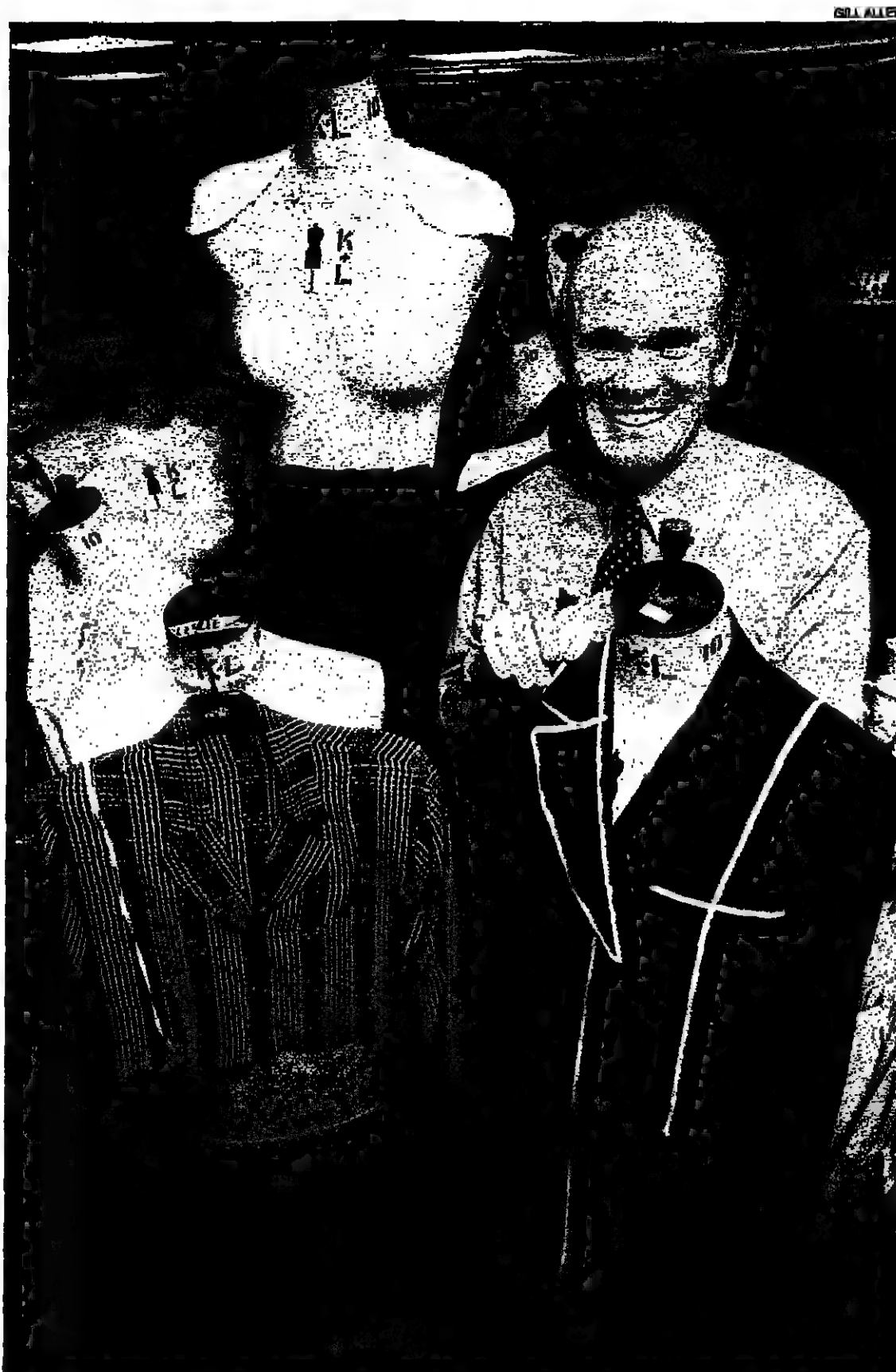
"That's tough. It's a bit of a grind," he says.

He tries to visit stores on a Friday because that way he can get a feel for what's likely to happen at the weekend. "I would love to say that without fail I'm in the stores every Friday, but no, it's not like that. I do try to visit stores every week. Sometimes it's a matter of driving to Birmingham and spending the day there and visiting anything up to about 12 stores," he says.

Lovelock's day tends to end around 6.30pm, with work encroaching into the evening only once or twice a week. A situation he says he thinks is reasonable, but "if you asked my wife she would say there seems to be a lot".

He tries not to take work home, but an hour or so is spent each Sunday checking through the figures before Monday's weekly conference call.

He admits this is a source of some annoyance to the family "as the kids are getting to the age when they want to monopolise the phone and the fact that their dad is on it, with people ringing in with figures, is not on".



Derek Lovelock says, humorously, that he discourages his wife from buying from rival stores

HIDDEN ASSETS

Foyer that brings back fond memories of grander days

Lindsay Cook discovers an art deco gem in the Forte hotels empire

Deep inside a vault at the Victoria and Albert Museum is one of the hidden assets of Forte, Britain's largest hotels group, which received an unwelcome £3.4 billion takeover bid from Granada this week.

The elegant piece does not come from one of the "trophy" hotels that Lord Forte and his son, Sir Rocco Forte, have brought into the group, such as the Hotel George V in Paris, Hotel Ritz in Madrid, or the Hyde Park Hotel, but from the lowly Strand Palace Hotel. The V&A has tucked away the hotel's foyer, a splendid example of Oliver Bernard's art deco architecture and design.

The hotel in the Strand is opposite the much grander Savoy Hotel, for which the Fortes battled over the past 14 years, but never won control. The foyer was refurbished earlier this year to give it a modern, contemporary look.

Olga Polizzi, Sir Rocco's sister, who is responsible for decor and design at the hotels, has long wanted to restore the foyer to its former art deco glory. The Forte board has yet

to consider such a proposal, but Mrs Polizzi has a £200 million budget so money should not be a problem.

Should the board decide not to proceed, the lobby will remain at the V&A, where it has been since 1969 under the supervision of the keeper of furniture and woodwork. It has not yet been on display to the public, but is being kept at the right temperature and condition so that the mirrors and marble do not deteriorate.

The lobby was not an original feature of the hotel, which was designed by Joseph Lyons — of nippies fame — and colleagues on the directorate of J Lyons in the early years of the century.

The completed hotel was opened on September 14, 1909. The price of a single room with bath and breakfast was five shillings and sixpence, or 7.5p. It was advertised as for people

"who cannot afford to waste money". The publicity said it had everything that the expensive hotels did, except the "expensiveness".

The Bernard lobby was added in 1928 when the hotel was refurbished and reopened with an additional eight floors. It had moved into a new age when each of the hotel rooms had a telephone and independently controlled central heating.

With marbled walls, geometric carpet, leaded ceiling lights and ashtrays on stands, the foyer was at the leading edge of the art deco movement.

Nowadays, the hotel, which is close to Covent Garden, is a bustling centre of tourism, attracting many Americans and other tourists on short stopovers in London, who want to be at the centre of things. The foyer seems to be constantly busy day or night as customers

seek out the Original Carvery, Johnston's brasserie and bar, or the Bianco Wine Cellar. Only the Mask Bar gives a hint of the calmer, quieter, more discreet days in the Strand Palace's history.

Then the biggest sign in the foyer was for the hotel doctor, with the printed guidance that those in need of such assistance should apply to the hall porter.

Insiders at Forte remember the foyer fondly from the more leisurely and grander days of hotels, reminiscent of a scene from one of Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot murder mysteries.

As one of the middling hotels in the Forte empire, it does not appear in danger of being sold by Forte as a defence measure or Granada should it win the takeover battle.

The three-star hotel provides 783 of the group's 97,000 rooms and stands on the site of the historic Exeter Hall, which was owned by the Dukes of Exeter. It received planning permission in 1907 and is one of London's oldest hotels.



The main entrance of the art deco foyer of the Strand Palace Hotel, with the hall porter's desk on the right

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WEEKEND MONEY

PENSIONS 37

Which is the best scheme for you?



Anne Ashworth and her team on what Kenneth Clarke's third Budget may mean to you

Taxpayers hope to get lucky



Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, will rise to his feet — presumably shod in the familiar Hush Puppies — on Tuesday fully aware that taxpayers are expecting to get lucky in his third Budget. Income tax cuts seem to be in store, with a reduction in the 25 per cent basic rate and some adjustments to the 20 per cent rate widely predicted to take more people out of the tax net. However, as a report in *The Times* revealed earlier this week, a man on average earnings would need a cut of 8 per cent to restore him to the position he enjoyed in 1992-93.

Some pronouncement from Mr Clarke to clarify the confused area of long-term care for the elderly is also expected. Tax concessions for those prepared in their youth to take long-term care insurance have been mooted. For details of these and other forecast measures, such as the threat of extra tax on insurance premiums, see below.

THE ODDS ON INCOME TAX CUTS

THE expected £3 billion to £5 billion in income tax cuts seems likely to focus on the 20 per cent lower rate of tax and the 25 per cent basic rate of tax, lessening the burden of taxation on the average worker. In its Budget racecard, Coopers & Lybrand gives the chances of a 1 per cent cut from the basic rate as 1-2. But it doubts whether the Chancellor can afford to be more generous. The odds on a 2 per cent cut are, it says, 100-1.

Coopers & Lybrand gives the odds for a 1 per cent increase in the 20 per cent rate as 5-1. More likely, it believes, is an increase in the lower rate threshold, the level at

which the tax becomes payable. The aim of raising the threshold is to take people out of the tax net, encouraging them to join the workforce rather than rely on benefits. The chances of an inflation-linked rise of 3.9 per cent are 1-2, with 3-1 odds on a increase of more than inflation. At present, about one in five people pay tax only at the 20 per cent rate. When it was introduced in the 1992-93 tax year, it was payable on the first £2,000 worth of taxable income. In successive Budgets, the band has been widened, with the first £3,200 worth of income now being taxable at this rate. The Chancellor this week

again made it clear that it was his eventual aim to make 20 per cent the basic rate of tax.

Reductions in the basic and lower rates would benefit those on modest and average earnings. The Chancellor may, however, also act to cut taxes for the slightly better off, alarmed that the numbers now paying the 40 per cent higher rate of tax have swelled to more than 2.5 million. The 40 per cent rate now applies to taxable earnings above £24,301. There is a chance that he will move to increase this threshold by more than the rate of inflation.



The Chancellor is expected to deliver tax cuts in his Budget speech on Tuesday

Benefit taxed in error

A Scottish couple, alerted by an article in *Weekend Money*, were £1,300 richer this week after questioning the Inland Revenue about their tax bill.

(Marianne Curphey writes.) The husband was receiving the basic state pension, plus an allowance for the couple's two school-age daughters as well as ordinary child benefit.

A letter in *Weekend Money* alerted them that they were paying tax on the dependent children's allowance even though, like child benefit, it is not taxable.

They wrote to the Inland Revenue with details of their financial situation, and within a month they had received the cheque, with a promise of a further refund next year.

"We are extremely grateful to *The Times* and delighted with the way the Revenue dealt with our inquiry," the couple, who have asked not to be named, said yesterday.

Unaware that the allowance was tax-free, even though it was added onto the basic state retirement pension, the couple had been paying too much tax for at least four years.

They said: "We just did not know that we had wrongly been declaring our allowance in the 'income for others' box on our annual tax form."

The Benefits Agency said the allowance was additional to the basic state pension.

A spokesman said yesterday: "Only a very small proportion of people are in this situation."

Geoffrey Bernstein, an independent actuary, said the case was unusual. "I have never heard of such a case before, but this is very good news for them," he said.

Weekend Money is edited by Anne Ashworth

PROFITS-RELATED PAY

IF THE Chancellor announces a big headline tax cut in Tuesday's Budget, then he may very well abolish the tax relief on profits-related pay to claw back some money for the Treasury, according to Chris Giles of the Institute of Fiscal Studies.

PRP schemes are seen as an easy target for the Chancellor. They will cost the Government an estimated £800 million this fiscal year in lost tax revenues, and increasingly are seen as no longer doing what they were intended to do.

PRPs were introduced in Nigel Lawson's 1986 Budget to promote more active employee involvement in the success of companies and have become very popular. By March this year, there were 9,425 registered PRP schemes with close to 2.5 million employees.

PRP payments are tax-free if they do not exceed £4,000 or 20 per cent of total earnings (whichever is lower). Higher amounts are subject to tax. For employees, this can mean tax savings of £1,000 for basic-rate taxpayers or £1,600 for higher-rate taxpayers.

Tony Butcher of Touche Ross says: "PRP can be used by employers to reduce or maintain gross pay levels while increasing employees' net pay." The Institute for Fiscal Studies, in its Green Budget for the Chancellor, said: "There is little evidence to suggest that profits-related pay actually fluctuates with the profits of the companies." Research has indicated that companies manipulate the pool of profits to produce reasonably stable levels of PRP.

STAFF BONUSES AND LOOPHOLES

THE Chancellor may make another attempt to close the loophole that allows employers to escape paying National Insurance (NI) on bonuses given to highly paid staff. Early versions of these schemes involved City high-flyers receiving bonuses in gold bullion, diamonds, or cash unit trusts.

Accountants, who are finalising the details of schemes this weekend before the Budget deadline, will not disclose what assets they are now using. But it is thought that Persian rugs, racehorses, greyhounds, and Savile Row suits feature in some arrangements.

The aim is to avoid the 10.2 per cent NI charge that would otherwise be payable on the bonus. The saving for company can be considerable,

amounting to £10,300 on a £100,000 bonus before accountants' fees. Employees, meanwhile, have no cause for complaint as the assets are easily convertible into cash. In most cases, the employee would not take possession of the Persian rug.

The ruse is based on the general principle that income tax extends to all payments, whereas NI extends only to cash. The loss to the Exchequer, however, may be as much as £50 million a year.

Ministers find the schemes distasteful. In a speech last year, Peter Lilley described them as "spivvy".

Philip Fisher, of Chantrey Vellacott, the accountant, believes that the Chancellor could easily put an end to the practice. It would also be "politically acceptable".

INSURANCE PREMIUM TAX

INDUSTRY rumours suggest the Chancellor will raise insurance premium tax (IPT) including household, car, and travel insurance, from 2.5 to 6 per cent. The tax, which was introduced last year, could add another £32 to the average family bill and raise a further £1,750 million for the Treasury.

The Association of British Insurers predicts that low-income families living in cities will be worst hit. There is also a fear that the Government's decision could lead to an increase in the number of uninsured vehicles and homes.

David Arnold, of Ernst & Young, predicts that the Government may introduce a system of variable rates. He also thinks some types of health insurance, including PHI and critical illness cover, could be subject to IPT for the first time.

LONG-TERM CARE COSTS

CHARITIES and insurance companies believe Mr Clarke is most likely to bow to the demands of middle-class families and double to £16,000 the savings threshold that cuts off state help for long-term care. The current limit of £8,000 was set in 1988. The Chancellor is known to be considering measures to safeguard property when elderly people go into nursing homes. This would enable them to pass on a proportion of their assets to their children.

One option being looked at is to ignore the first £20,000 of property when elderly people are means-tested to judge their eligibility for state care. Insurance companies have been lobbying the Government to give tax incentives to people who take out policies which would pay for long-term care.

If the Chancellor accepts that the state will have to share half the burden of care as the population ages, he has a number of options. The Budget could clarify whether the state is prepared to pay for nursing fees but not accommodation, an idea which has already been floated. Or, people might be required to fund their own care for the first three years, after which the state would step in and meet the cost, whatever their means. Insurance companies have supported the latter policy.

A report by the all-party Health Committee of MPs recommended this week that the Health Department draw up a long-term care charter to spell out national minimum standards expected from local authorities, GPs and NHS Trusts. The Government has now signalled it intends to set up a working party to look at ways to fund care for the elderly.

HOUSING TRUSTS

TENS of thousands of investors trapped in property related Business Expansion Schemes could be thrown a lifeline in the Budget in the form of housing investment trusts (HITs). These trusts, proposed in the Government's housing white paper, will be set up to own and manage property for rent. Institutions investing in rented housing through a trust will be given tax breaks. HITs could buy up portfolios of rented property from BES companies. These companies were set up to buy property and rent it out. Individuals who invested benefited from generous tax breaks and were promised a guaranteed exit return.

But many companies have been unable to sell their property to produce the returns promised to investors.

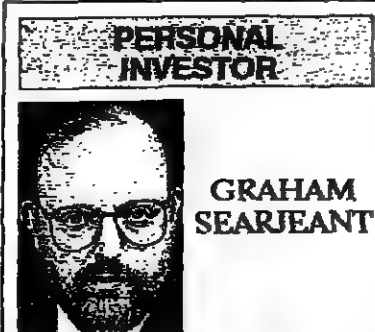
London envies Wall Street

Hopes of a cut in interest rates plus the spice of takeover bids at last propelled the FT-SE 100 share index above 3,600 last week. But investors with a memory are not exactly dancing in the aisles. The blue chip index is still only about 2 per cent above its brief February 1994 peak, before a boom in fixed-interest bonds burst.

On Wall Street, meanwhile, the Dow Jones average of blue chips surged above 5,000 this week. On a broader average American share prices are up a third over 12 months. Ten years ago, both the FT-SE and the Dow stood at about 1,400. UK share prices could catch up, but don't hold your breath.

There is no particular reason why the two most popular share indices should be near each other. If you take the FT-SE numbers back to the start of 1978, they were little more than half the Dow. American stocks performed badly under America's pre-Reagan stagnation, but have pulled further away since Britain went into recession.

There are three main influences on share prices: profits, interest rates and confidence. EZW, who follow these things, note a striking divergence of interest rates. In 1985, ten-year government bonds, the nearest rival to shares among institutional investors, carried a market interest rate of about 10.6 per cent in America, 11 per cent in sterling. Now American bonds yield about 6 per cent, UK gilt-edged 7.8 per cent, even though inflation and short-term interest rates differ less. That wider confidence gap is reflected in the lower income investors accept on American shares.



PERSONAL INVESTOR

GRAHAM SEARJEANT

The average UK dividend yield has fallen from 4.2 per cent to just under 4 per cent over a decade. In America, it is down from 3.5 nearly to 2 per cent.

American companies are paying out relatively less and investing more to grow faster. Stock market valuation of profits varies less. In America, shares sell at about 18 times latest company earnings, up from 15 times a decade ago. British shares sell at 16 times, up from about 12 times. Evidently, company profits have grown much faster in America, notably since 1992. True, America is about 18 months ahead of the UK in the economic cycle, but profits grew much more strongly during the recovery phase than in Britain.

Britain's recovery is also fading, while America is still growing. EZW projects that for 1995 as a whole, US company earnings will grow on average by 16-17 per cent, in Britain by 9-10 per cent. That alone explains why New York is outpacing London. In Britain, the

recovery has been too patchy. Construction output is 3 per cent lower than a year ago. No wonder building materials and construction shares are 3 per cent down on the year, against an 18.5 per cent rise in the FT-SE index. The paper and packaging sector is down 10 per cent, textiles and clothing down 6 per cent. By contrast, shares in drug companies are up 63 per cent and high street banks 45 per cent. America's business growth is more broadly based. As the fall in dividend ratios and bond yields suggests, it has adjusted to achieving growth with low inflation.

The tables could still turn in Britain's favour. Confidence has been held back because people thought interest rates would keep rising until the next recession. If base rates are now cut, albeit thanks to summer stagnation, consumers, home-seekers and company boards might begin to believe that growth can continue. That could help long-term rates too, making now a good time to buy bonds for income.

Meanwhile, the takeover boom is good for shares, if not for the economy. Companies, flush with funds, lack confidence in the economy, and prefer to buy rivals rather than invest. Bids in lagging sectors, such as hotels and construction, are a short-term proxy for missing growth. More will follow.

If base rates do fall, London shares could have better prospects than Wall Street. But there is no chance of catching up until an election has cleared the political uncertainty that now puts off foreign investors. Roll on 1997.

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Jenny Grove tells how a seeming victory over pensions in February turned into a near-defeat

Betrayed war widows fight on

A year-long battle for better pensions for armed forces widows has left many feeling betrayed — in some cases by the MPs who pledged to support them.

In February, Lord Freyberg persuaded the Lords to pass an amendment to the Pensions Bill to help elderly war widows — those who had forfeited their pensions through subsequent remarriage and divorce. After the Lords victory, the Officers' Pensions Society, headed by Major General Peter Bonnet, highlighted the plight of another three groups — younger war widows forfeiting pensions on remarriage; elderly widows receiving only one third of their former husband's pension; and those with no pension because of post-retirement marriages.

An early day motion proposing better pension rights for the three groups was tabled by Alfred Morris, MP for Manchester, Wythenshawe, and signed by 251 MPs. A further 50 wrote letters of support. At the final reading of the Bill in the Commons on July 4, not only were the key clauses defeated by 199 votes to 41, but 38 of the MPs who

voted against had signed the early day motion.

When the Pensions Act became law on July 19, only one group of widows stood to gain, the 16,500 elderly war widows covered by Lord Freyberg's amendment. Of these, 9,000 claims have resulted in only about 150 pensions being paid.

General Bonnet said yesterday the campaign partners, including the War Widows' Association and RAF Widows' Association, were "delighted" with the concessions achieved so far. "But we were profoundly disappointed to have been defeated on the changes we sought." These service widows "are now getting old and feel neglected and forgotten".

He said such reforms were common practice in 15 other Allied and Commonwealth countries. "We intend to go on seeking justice."

Any war widow who believes she might be eligible to have her DSS war widow's pension re-instated because a second marriage has ended in bereavement or divorce, should contact: DSS War Pensions Agency, Norcross, Blackpool, Lancs FY3 3WP. Helpline: 01253 858588.



Jackie Towl says the pensions structure reinforces loneliness

The struggle for survival

One war widow still waiting for her pension is 77-year-old Jonne Blundell. Mrs Blundell's first husband, Flight Lieutenant Dicky Filleul, whom she married in 1940, was killed in September 1944 when his Flying Fortress was shot down over France and sank in the Channel. Her second husband — also a flight lieutenant — left her in 1980 and since their divorce she has received no maintenance.

Until this summer, as a war widow whose husband died before 1973, and who subsequently remarried and divorced, Mrs Blundell was left without a military pension. If her second marriage had ended in bereavement the pension might have been restored — but only if she could prove hardship. Now, as from July 19, the date the Pensions Act became law, her Department of Social Security war widow's pension will be restored automatically.

Mrs Blundell, who lives near Tonbridge, Kent, says: "For years I've been doing gardening work to supplement my income. If I miss a day, I really do miss the money. Now my war widow's pension is going to be restored, it'll be nice to feel I needn't turn out in the snow."

For Jackie Towl, 45, widow of Squadron Leader John Towl, who was killed in a Tornado accident in Powys, Wales, in

1986, the outcome of the Pensions Bill debate is disappointing.

Lord Freyberg's amendment was, she says, a small reform in the right direction. "It's a help, but the DSS pays only a small part of my pension." As a war widow whose husband was killed after 1973, most of her pension is paid by the Ministry of Defence. Strict rules mean that remarriage — or even co-habitation — will result in the pension being stopped.

Mrs Towl believes such strictures are unfair and that a war widow's pension

before March 31 1973, as a widow she receives only one third of his pension. Flight Lieutenant Robert Cornish took part in the Battle of Arnhem. They married in 1947 and he retired from the RAF on March 19 1973.

The date is significant. Had he retired two weeks later he would have had the opportunity to "buy-in" for a better pension. Since his death in 1967, Mrs Cornish, now 74, has had to make do on one third of her husband's pension. She says: "I let part of my home as a self-catering flat. If I didn't do that, I wouldn't be able to afford clothes or a holiday."

Jean Hale, now 80, married retired Lieutenant Commander Jay Hale in 1953. Her husband's 25 years in the Navy included 36 hours clinging to wreckage in the Indian Ocean in April 1942 after his ship was sunk by the Japanese.

In spite of his service, and Mrs Hale's five years in the WAAF, when he died in 1984, Mrs Hale was told she was not entitled to a military pension. Later the rules were changed, but the possibility of a pension depended on length of service after April 1978. Mrs Hale, of Torrington, Devon, says she learnt to live on a limited income. "I spend most of my time putting off repairs to an old house. I skimp on heating sometimes, and I grow all my own vegetables and fruit."

“If I didn't let part of the house, I wouldn't be able to afford clothes or a holiday”

should be paid for life, not forfeited on remarriage. As an armed forces wife, she had little chance of building a career of her own. Now she feels sentenced to life-long widowhood.

"With two children and two step-children, I'm not going to tamper with my financial security. Widows are bound to be lonely, but the pension structure reinforces that loneliness," she says.

Jennifer Cornish, of Kingsbridge, Devon, has different concerns. Because her husband retired from the armed forces



Jonne Blundell has supplemented her income by gardening

A QUESTION OF MONEY

Where to make your complaints

When you want a financial problem resolved with speed and at no cost, finding the right person and following the correct complaints procedure can make all the difference.

It is always best to approach the firm involved first and only when you have exhausted its internal complaints service write to the relevant self-regulatory body. The final stage is to take your complaint to the ombudsman, if there is one.

Q What should I do first?

A There is sometimes a time limit on complaints if you are looking for redress. Always keep a record of any letters or phone calls between you and the firm. Collect your evidence, and note the main points you want to raise. Then take up your complaint with the firm by phone. Most complaints are dealt with at this level.

If it is a simple misunderstanding, ask the firm to send you, in writing, what has been agreed. If it cannot be sorted out over the phone, send a letter to the firm's managing director. Try to be factual, outlining the main details of the complaint, including dates and names.

Enclose photocopies of relevant documents or correspondence and ask for a response within a specific time scale.

Q What if I am unhappy with the response?

A By law, all firms must investigate and assess your complaint. But if the firm is taking an unusu-

ally long time to reply, or you are not satisfied with its response, your next step is to request a "deadlock letter". Write to the firm's regulator, which is an independent official watchdog with legal powers. Explain what you think the firm has done wrong, what losses you have suffered, and what you want the regulator to do about it.

The Securities and Investments Board has a central register that lists the names of companies and their regulators.

Q How do I complain to a regulatory body?

A Put your complaint in writing, with the "deadlock letter" and copies of relevant papers enclosed. The regulator will assess whether the firm has treated you badly or broken any rules and, using powers of persuasion, will come to a decision. They may want to interview you, and will certainly make contact with the firm. The regulator will notify you of the outcome, but the time taken will depend on the complexity of the complaint.

Q What if a settlement cannot be reached?

A The regulator usually has an independent investigator, or ombudsman with a semi-judicial function, who in some circumstances can grant a cash award up to a set limit.

If you are still not satisfied, you may be able to take your procedure to the courts, but that could be an expensive route. By taking your complaint to the ombudsman, you do not lose any of your legal rights.

HELPLINES

Investment Management Regulatory Organisation, Broadwalk House, 5 Appold Street, London EC2A 2LL. 0171-390 5000. Securities and Investments Board, Gaville House, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8RA. 0171-638 1240. Personal Investment Authority, Hertsmere House, Hertsmere Road, London E14 4AB. 0171-538 8866. Banking Ombudsman, 0171-404 9944. Building Societies Ombudsman, 0171-931 0044. Insurance Ombudsman, 0171-928 7600. Pensions Ombudsman, 0171-834 9144. Investment Ombudsman, 0171-796 3065.

MORAG PRESTON

The charges on some personal pensions have dropped by more than 12 per cent over the last year, according to a survey from Bacon & Woodrow, consulting actuaries.

Life companies have been forced to cut their costs because of new rules which came into force at the beginning of this year. The new rules mean they have to explain their charges to customers. To remain competitive, many companies have cut their costs over the last 11 months. However, Andrew Warwick-Thompson, Bacon & Woodrow associate partner, believes that cost-cutting will, in the long run, be bad news for the consumer. He said: "Providers are becoming increasingly conscious of the cost of distributing their

Life companies forced to cut pension charges

pension plans via different types of independent adviser. Advisers who can afford the necessary hardware to deal with providers electronically and, therefore, most cost-effectively are likely to be preferred to the smaller, less-technologically advanced firms."

He said this would lead to a reduction in the number of places where it was possible to get advice about pensions. "The traditional, one or two-man high street firms are pretty unlikely to survive." He also said that the number of companies providing personal pensions is likely to shrink to only

a handful over the next few years, which will reduce choice, and allow companies to increase their charges over the longer term.

The survey, on 244 unit-linked personal pensions, found that, for pensions where contributions are made on a recurring single premium basis, the best companies were Standard Life and Norwich Union. Other companies that were highly rated by Bacon & Woodrow were Sun Life, Legal & General and London & Manchester.

Where contributions were paid into the plan on a regular monthly basis, the best companies were

again Standard Life and Norwich Union, with Clerical Medical, Gartmore and Equitable Life also getting a high rating.

Bacon & Woodrow used four screening methods to analyse the pensions' performance, charges and volatility. All the analysis was carried out assuming that no commission was taken out of the contributions — Bacon & Woodrow is a fee-charging adviser. The survey pointed out that different results might be obtained if commission-paying terms, still the more usual way of remunerating advisers, were used. Mr Warwick

Thompson said: "Many people, particularly those paying a high contribution will find that they will get much better value for money by dealing with an adviser who will charge a time-costed fee for advising them and set their policy up on nil commission terms. For example, someone paying £100 a month for 20 years could expect the emerging pension fund to be about 11 per cent greater if the premiums were paid to a nil commission policy." Policyholders whose advisers insisted on commission would get better value on regular premium contributions if the com-

mission was spread over the term of the policy rather than being levied upfront.

The first test to which Bacon & Woodrow put the funds excluded 90 pensions which had below-average performance. Among those that scored lowest were American Life, Midland Life, Provident Life, and Windsor Life.

The second screen selected those funds which have appeared in the top quartiles of performance most frequently and in the bottom quartiles least frequently — only 58 passed through this test. Among those that failed this hurdle were

Century with its UK Life fund, Old Mutual's managed fund and Target's managed opportunity fund. The third test knocked out those pensions funds which were considered to be the most volatile from the 58 remaining — 18 were excluded on volatility grounds. Four more funds, from Aegon, Provident Mutual, Scottish Amicable and United Friendly were excluded because their performance was in decline.

The remaining 36 funds were analysed according to charges and features. Among those that made it through to this stage were funds from Friends Provident, Allied Dunbar, Abbey Life, Prudential and Royal Life.

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Those who have ever chosen a pension or an endowment have probably wished that they could have consulted a "best-buy" list. Knowing which insurance companies could be eliminated because their investment record is poor would have simplified a complex task. This is why this week's proposal from the Office of Fair Trading to extend Which?-type scores to endowments and pension plans makes such good sense.

The OFT would like to see individual policies given rankings, ranging between Triple A for the champions and Triple C for the losers. These are similar to the scores awarded by Moody's and Standard & Poor's, the powerful rating agencies that assess the creditworthiness of businesses.

City professionals who



COMMENT
ANNE ASHWORTH
Personal Finance
Editor

have infinite amounts of performance and other data at their disposal place great reliance on the S&P's pronouncements. Why should an equivalent guide not be available to ordinary people?

When these endowment and pension ratings will be published is, however, another matter, a detail that must come as a relief to those insurance companies that know that the new system will expose their sins.

The OFT, at first, believed that the press could compile the figures. A strange suggestion, given that the average newspaper does not keep spare actuaries around in the hope that one day the OFT will call upon its services. The body is now attempting to find other means of putting the numbers together. Spurring the OFT on is its conviction that the life and

pension disclosure rules, introduced this year, cannot, by themselves, enable consumers to make an informed choice.

It is vital to know how much an insurer deducts from your premiums in commissions and charges. This does not, however, give you enough knowledge to compare policies. Disclosure (see page 30) may have forced down charges. But it cannot single-handedly ensure that insurance companies provide good value and are cleaner-than-clean.

Perk dilemma

BUDGET commentators seem certain that the Chancellor will attack at least one employment (or unemployment) perk. Last month, they were convinced that his target would be redundancy

money. Currently, the first £30,000 of any golden handshake is tax-free. But some within the Inland Revenue are apparently convinced that the concession is being abused.

In past Budgets, Kenneth Clarke seems to have paid little heed to what taxmen think. This may be why profit-related pay (PRP) is now said to be within his sights, as the Revenue has, as yet, given no signs that it also disapproves of this tax break.

Introduced in the 1987 Budget, PRP was intended to involve workers in the fortunes of their employer. If they accept that their salaries will be linked to their company's performance, then they can receive up to £4,000 of their wages tax-free.

Those who believe that the Chancellor will either restrict or abolish the tax relief say that businesses are using PRP to save on their payroll costs. The arrangement has become less an exercise in popular capitalism and more a hidden employment subsidy. Ending the exemption would save £800 million.

But would the Chancellor really want to offend the three million voters now in PRP schemes?

Jean Eaglesham meets a woman who missed out on an excellent scheme

When a talk on pensions is a source of conflict

Insurance sales representatives are forbidden by the regulators to use the on-going £2 billion-plus pensions review as a sales opportunity.

However, a Prudential representative who visited Susan Cornille in June and discussed the review then advised her to increase her contributions to her personal pension plan. Mrs Cornille claims the representative told her that, as a "formality", he required her signature on a form to say that she had agreed to the original decision to take out the plan, rather than join her employer's scheme.

Mrs Cornille, a sheltered housing worker, has been employed by Leeds City Council for more than 25 years but has never been a member of the pension scheme. In December 1992, she contacted the Prudential to ask whether she should take out a personal pension or join the council scheme. She says the representative advised her that the insurer's scheme would provide a better pension.

In fact, such advice would have been quite wrong. Employees who are entitled to join their employer's scheme are almost invariably better off doing so, because they get the benefit of the employer's pension contributions on top of their own.

In Mrs Cornille's case, she missed out on a particularly



Susan Cornille is angry about the advice she received

good scheme. The West Yorkshire Superannuation Fund, which covers Leeds council workers, offers an employer's contribution that is roughly double the employee's; provision for ill-health or voluntary early retirement; and an inflation-linked pension. The Prudential

personal pension offers none of these benefits. It locks Mrs Cornille into a retirement age of 63. And the increased contributions now account for more than half her net take-home pay.

The Prudential refused to comment on the case, other than to say that there was a conflict between the accounts of their representative and Mrs Cornille and that the case was being dealt with as part of the review. A spokesman said: "It is certainly not our practice to get customers to sign disclaimers."

The regulators recently announced that they had decided not to discipline the Prudential after an 18-month investigation into the way it sold personal pensions.

ADVICE ROW

INDEPENDENT financial advisers are lobbying their watchdog, the Personal Investment Authority, to try to force company pension schemes to pick up at least part of the estimated £2 billion to £3 billion bill for bad advice given to people switching from company to personal pension schemes. Garry Heath, of the Independent Financial Advisers Association, says that the company scheme trustees and actuaries have "got away with murder". He is particularly concerned about the cases where people failed to join their current employer's scheme, or switched from it, in favour of a personal pension. This is almost always a bad move, as you lose the benefit of your employer's contributions.

Nevertheless, some 800,000 people did this after taking financial advice. Mr Heath believes the schemes should share the blame. He claims that the schemes' trustees gave people in these circumstances "almost no warnings at all. They had a vested interest in not doing so, as they were losing liabilities (in other words, the commitment to pay out pensions in the future) from the scheme". Sun Life, the insurer, has estimated that employers "saved" £1.5 billion in contributions.

The row highlights the limitations on the advice that trustees can give, despite being charged with looking after scheme members' interests. As the schemes are not authorised as investments by the Financial Services Act, trustees cannot advise on whether to switch pensions.

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Source and basis of figures: *Micropal, offer to bid, net income reinvested to 1/11/95.

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Older people find private insurance can be prohibitively expensive, says Helen Pridham

A question of health and wealth

The hip replacement operation of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother appears to have been very successful. But it has been suggested that had she been an ordinary member of the public, she would not have been offered this treatment under the National Health Service.

Anecdotal evidence indicates that some health authori-

ties are effectively refusing some treatments on the basis of old age. This may encourage more people to consider taking out private medical insurance (PMI).

Unfortunately, private medical insurance for older people is often prohibitively expensive. Stephen Walker of Medical Insurance Services, a firm of intermediaries in Brighton, says: "The cost of many policies rises in leaps and bounds once you get into your sixties and seventies - when people generally most need PMI cover but can least afford huge premium increases."

"We receive a large number of inquiries from elderly people who have been with an insurer for many years, have never made a claim and are dismayed at their premiums rising to an unaffordable level as they get older."

Premiums go up for two reasons - inflation and age. Insurers usually carry out annual reviews, adjusting their premiums in line with inflation and claims experience. This has led to rapid increases in recent years because of high rates of medical inflation. Average increases this year are expected to be about 10 to 15 per cent.

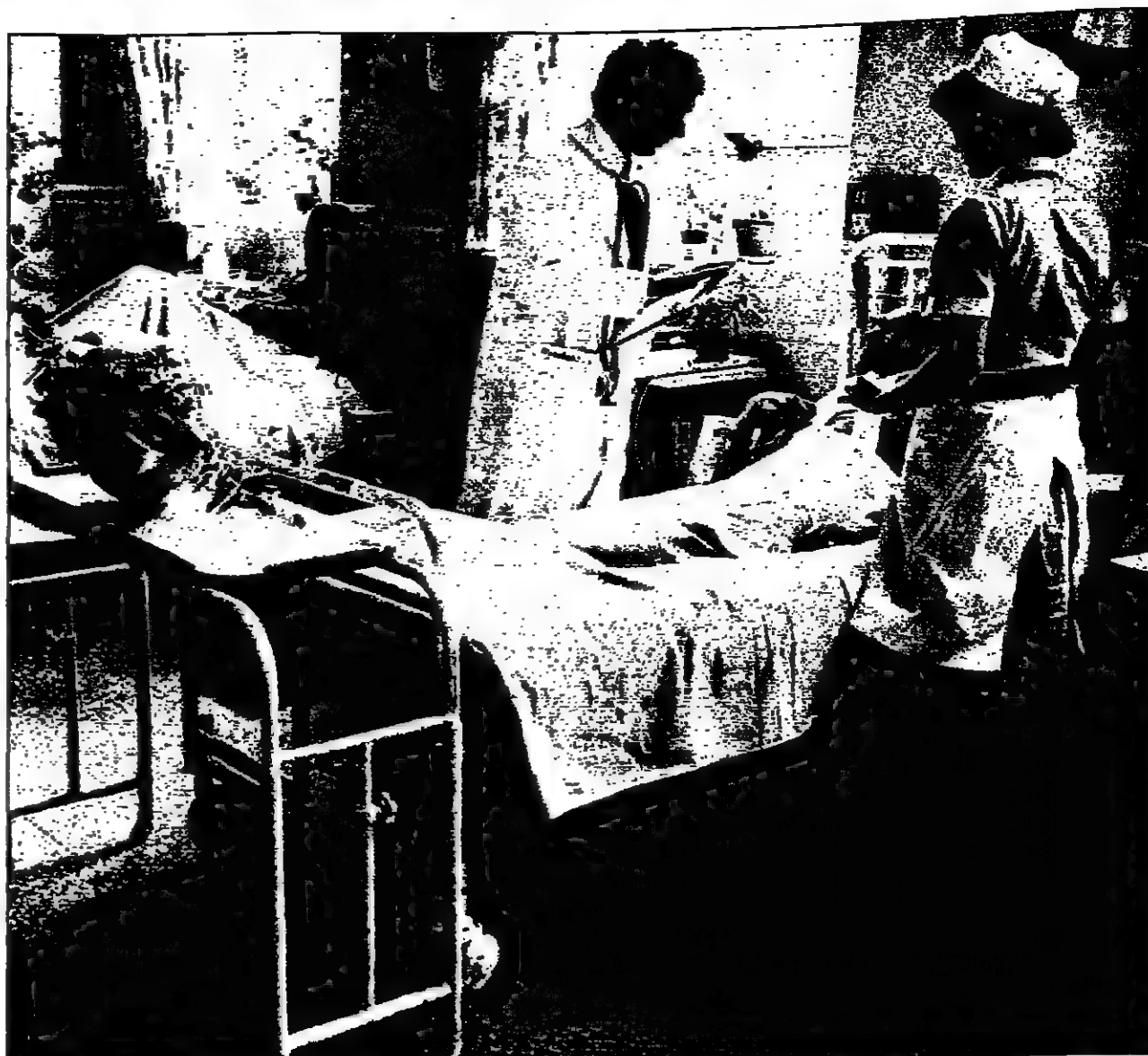
Most insurers also have a system of age-banding their premiums. Premiums rise in five or ten-year age bands. Each level of premiums is based on the claims history for that age band. This can result in big jumps in premiums as you get older. Tax relief of 25 per cent is available on premiums when you get to 60, but the cost can still become prohibitive.

Mr Walker points out that significant increases can occur even in your early fifties. At present, few companies give any reward for loyalty so you pay the same whether a new recruit or someone who has been with an insurer for 20 years and never claimed.

There are exceptions. Prime Health, for example, operates a no-claims discount. A more attractive approach adopted by OHRA, a Dutch-owned company, is to impose only one age-related premium increase after a customer joins - on his or her next "0" birthday. David Potter, of OHRA, says: "Your premiums will still increase in line with inflation but not because of age. This is our way of giving customers a loyalty bonus."

One company that does not impose any age-related premium increases is Exeter Friendly Society. Established in 1927, and with 30,000 members, it specialises in providing cover for the over-fifties. Roger Cawse, the chief executive, says that by specialising and encouraging long-term membership, the society is able to calculate uniform premiums. He adds: "Our overheads are also not as high as some of our competitors."

Exeter offers the choice of a



The cost of insurance can become an issue as policyholders advance in years and treatment becomes more likely.

comprehensive and a low-cost policy. Under the comprehensive policy, outpatient benefits are somewhat more restricted than some competitors' plans. The low-cost policy, like most others, does not normally cover outpatient treatment.

Mr Cawse says the most frequent claims are for hip replacement and cataract operations - for which patients often have to wait 12 months or more under the NHS.

It may not be too late to switch insurers when you are older but if you have received, or are receiving, treatment under your existing policy, then by transferring you may

have exclusions on your new policy for that treatment.

A new insurer may take you on a moratorium basis. This generally means that any condition suffered in the five years before joining is not covered until two years have elapsed since joining free of treatment or consultation. But it is advisable before switching to consult a specialist health insurance intermediary. Various chronic age-related conditions, such as arthritis, diabetes and Alzheimer's disease, are not normally covered by PMI policies. If you suffer one of these complaints, you will be back to square one with the NHS.

PRIVATE MEDICAL INSURANCE					
Cost of Budget policies for a couple aged 55 today, with premium projections based on current rates					
	65 2pm	60 2pm	55 2pm	70 2pm	75 2pm
Warwick Union	39.30	52.88	52.88	52.88	108.16
Personal Plan	40.88	42.18	50.21	52.55	78.82
Key Plan	61.22	46.79	68.94	67.07	71.38
SCIA	61.40	46.05	48.08	48.05	48.05
Vital Scale	67.84	58.21	73.48	82.83	116.11
Exeter Friendly	67.88	58.55	73.48	82.83	116.11
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Essential Care+					

*Tax relief has been deducted + includes cover for some out-patient treatment
Source: Medical Insurance Services

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Guide to prospecting for gold cards that suit you

A colleague recently downgraded his American Express card from gold to green after discovering that he was not benefiting from any of the perks he was paying for.

"I first had an American Express gold card in the States, which was great because it offered free collision/damage insurance whenever I hired a car," he said. "When I moved to the UK, I found the card didn't have as many benefits, and there was no point forking out an extra £47.50 a year for the gold card after I moved to a bank that offered commission-free traveller's cheques."

The lull before Christmas spending starts is a good time to consider whether you need a gold card. With more and more card issuers reducing rates to woo customers, using a gold card can be a cost-effective way to get through the season. There is, however, no point in renewing a gold card with an annual fee if you are not getting value for money.

Not every gold card will suit your needs or spending habits. Fees vary from nothing to £250 a year, and benefits range from free comprehensive travel insurance to extended warranties for household electrical goods. It is important to shop around, because card issuers regularly change terms and benefits.

Big spenders at the end of their overdraft limit should consider a card with low interest rates. A gold card can be one of the cheapest ways to get an unsecured loan. People who regularly pay their balances in full, on time, would be better off looking for a card with low fees and benefits that suit their needs.

What are the interest options?

Charge cards linked to bank accounts often offer the best interest options. NatWest's gold Mastercard, for example, is tied to a NatWest current account. The card balance is paid off every month by debiting money from the bank account, which has an overdraft limit of £10,000 and an annual percentage rate of only 10 per cent. The rate is competitive with the best of the bank overdraft facilities and the spending limit is much higher, making the annual membership fee of £80 worthwhile for people who need time to pay off large purchases.

Some issuers now link card interest rates to base rates. This may seem like an obvious connection, but it has never been customary for issuers to pass on the benefits of falling base rates automatically to card holders. With the new cards, payments will fall, or rise, with base rates. Co-Op's new credit card guarantees that its

Is your top-ranking card really necessary?

And which is the best?

Karen Zagor reports



Christmas shopping tests credit limits

rates will be tied to base rates for life. The card, with an annual fee of £120, currently carries an APR of 11.4 per cent.

What about fees?

Some cards, like the traditional Co-Op gold card, have no fees. The card's APR of 19.5 per cent, is higher than Co-Op's fee-based card. However, it is lower than the 20.9 per cent APR for Barclaycard Gold Visa, which carries a £30 annual fee. NatWest charges £35 a year for its Visa Gold, which now has a reduced APR of 15.9 per cent.

How good is the travel cover?

Most gold cards carry some form of travel insurance, but the cover may not be as good as it looks. It pays to find out exactly how much cover you will get before taking out a gold card. NatWest's Visa gold card is fairly typical in its accident insurance, which applies only when you are actually in transit. So, you would be covered if your aircraft crashed, but not if injured in a friend's car while abroad. The NatWest Mastercard gold card, on the other hand, offers a comprehensive travel plan if you

pay for your holiday on the card, including up to £2 million in medical cover, up to £2,500 for lost bags and up to £3,500 for travel curtailment or delay.

What about air miles?

British card holders are not getting as good a deal as Americans on air miles linked to card usage. NatWest card holders, for example, get only one British Airways Air Mile for every £20 spent, against one American Airlines mile for every dollar spent with a US Citibank credit card. American Express Membership Awards can be transferred to several affiliated airlines. Effectively, £1 spent on the card earns one Virgin or Continental air mile.

Are there higher rates for getting cash?

Credit cards can be used for cash advances in most countries, but cash usually carries a higher interest rate than purchases, and charges may accrue from the day of the advance. If you plan to use your card to get cash regularly, shop around for the card with the lowest cash rates.

Will I get purchase protection?

Royal Bank of Scotland has been attracting customers to its new gold Visa card by offering a free second-year extended warranty on some household electrical appliances bought with the card. If the appliance already has a two-year warranty, the card holder will get a third year covered free. Many other cards have more limited purchase protection schemes, such as the NatWest gold Visa card, which covers goods for 90 days.

What are the spending limits?

There is no limit on the American Express charge card, but you must be able to pay off your balance every month. Royal Bank of Scotland says it tailors spending limits to individual needs. Gold credit and charge cards tend to have higher spending ceilings than standard cards. Those linked to bank accounts with overdraft facilities are particularly high. Save & Prosper's overdraft limit is £25,000 for an account linked to its gold card. The Save & Prosper card works like a bank debit card, with charges instantly deducted from the account. The overdraft facility on the linked bank account carries monthly charges of £5, plus an effective annual rate of 9.6 per cent.

Can anyone get a gold card?

Most gold cards have salary restrictions. Royal Bank of Scotland gold card holders must be over 21 and earn at least £20,000.

Granada switches on to the attraction of Forte

Target	Market	Value	Terms	Latest Closing
Forte	Granada	3,400	358.8p cash/1st share split	22/11 na
City Casuals	Cro.	27	140p per OC share	12/10 7/12
Sandhurst	CSW	1,800	698p cash/1st share split	8/11 na
Engl.Nat.Irv.	Pen-Canibogen	na	na	8/11 28/11
Northumb.Wtr	Lyonraide	883	1179p per NW share	23/11 na
S.Wales Elec	Weslnt Water	na	in discussion	na na

GRANADA, the TV and leisure company, was the big name among this week's bidders, with a £3.4 billion offer that was rejected by Forte, Britain's largest hotels group. Granada is offering four shares plus £23.25 in cash for every 15 Forte shares. Granada shares fell 48p to 649p; at that price, the offer values each Forte share at about

328p. Alternatively, shareholders can accept a full cash offer of 321.7p per share.

Northumbrian Water last week became the first water and sewerage company to be taken over. Northumbrian's board recommended that shareholders accept an offer from Lyonraide des Eaux, which values the company at £823 million. The offer consists of £11.65 in cash and 14p as a special dividend share.

Bids by PowerGen and National Power for Midlands Electricity and Southern Electric respectively, were referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission on Thursday.

MORAG PRESTON

Mrs Jean Ginder

Although Mrs Jean Ginder has successfully sued her husband (report, Weekend Money, October 28) for injuries received in an accident, damages have yet to be assessed.

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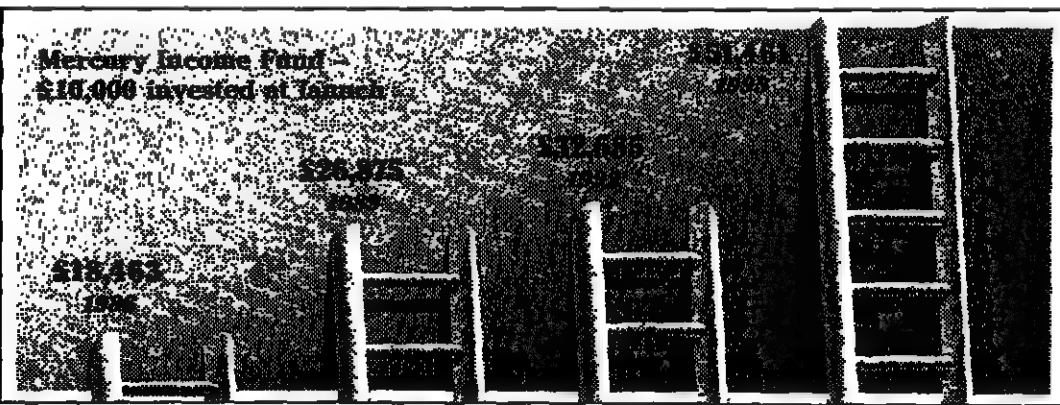
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Caroline Merrell finds foreign banks are leaving the UK mortgage business

Why home loan sales are good news for borrowers

Waking up to find that someone has bought your mortgage is becoming a more common occurrence. Billions of pounds of mortgage books have been sold this year to building societies. The bad news for borrowers is that, in spite of what some may think, they have to continue to make their repayments. The good news is that the interest rate may decrease a little.

These sales mark the ending of an era in the home loans industry that began in the mid-Eighties. New-style lenders, for the most part subsidiaries of overseas financial institutions, came into the market, offering low-rate loans, in an attempt to grab business from the building societies.

These discounts were often short-lived, as borrowers found to their cost. These new centralised lenders (so called because they did not have branches) found their margins squeezed when property prices fell and thousands defaulted on their loans.

These losses were passed on to other borrowers in higher rates. Meanwhile, the vigorous pursuit of bad debts by some lenders caused distress among borrowers.

A flood of complaints to trading standards officers has led to an Office of Fair Trading warning to the Mortgage Corporation, a subsidiary of Salomon Brothers in the US.

In many cases, centralised lenders advanced to those who would have found it difficult to get a mortgage elsewhere. Their assessment of customers' creditworthiness was sometimes sketchy. It is rumoured that one lender allowed the intermediaries who introduced borrowers to check their clients' ability to repay.

It was, in part, this philosophy of accepting customers turned down by other banks and building societies — for example, those who had County Court judgments against them, or who did not have proof of earnings — that eventually led to the



Hand over: foreign banks tried the field then passed on UK businesses

virtual dismembering of this sector. Foreign institutions shed their UK mortgage businesses with alacrity when it became apparent that the borrowers to whom they had chosen to lend money, were most at risk of going into arrears or being repossessed.

Ironically, over the past few months,

the mortgage books of many of these companies have been sold back to the lenders who turned down the business in the first place. The centralised-lender businesses that have been sold include the Household Mortgage Corporation (HMC), and CIBC, which were sold to the Abbey National; BNP,

a subsidiary of Banque National de Paris, which was sold to the Halifax; and Hypo MSL, which was sold to Birmingham Midshires Building Society.

The latter has indicated that it is keen to acquire more mortgage books if it can get them at the right price. Over five years, the society has spent £3 billion on mortgage books, an activity that is now seen as the surefire way to increase your society's assets in a slow mortgage market.

In spite of the overall fall in interest rates, those for the clients of many of the centralised lenders have, in numerous cases, remained above those offered by building societies.

Centralised lenders claim the arrears and high levels of repossessions they have experienced mean that they are unable to offer the maximum interest-rate cuts to their customers.

But can borrowers of centralised lenders look forward to better treatment in their new ownership structure? Ian Darby, marketing director of John Charcol, the mortgage broker, said: "Most people are delighted when they find out that their mortgage lender has been taken over. They view it as good news. There is a great deal of public relations pressure on building societies to ensure their rates are competitive."

He added: "It means the borrower is no longer the customer of an obscure, unknown lender." Mr Darby added that centralised lenders have been swifter to repossess the property of those who have slipped into arrears, and have adopted a less sympathetic attitude than mainstream banks and building societies. He said that he would not advise borrowers whose centralised lender had been taken over by a building society to move their loan.

A remortgage with the new parent society, or another lender, could entail the payment of premium for mortgage protection insurance — likely to be a substantial sum if the borrower is considered to be in a high-risk category.

Payment lottery for bought-out borrowers

The treatment of customers of the former centralised lenders under their new owners, whether they are building societies or banks, varies from owner to owner. For example, borrowers with Hypo MSL were paying an interest rate of 8.49 per cent. Under the new ownership of Birmingham Midshires, this will drop by 0.5 of a point to 7.99 per cent, in line with the society's variable

rate. However, the 28,000 HMC borrowers, with loans worth £1.5 billion, will not benefit from the same rate offered to borrowers with Abbey National. HMC borrowers are continuing to pay 8.49 per cent, 0.5 of a point higher than the 7.99 per cent offered to Abbey National borrowers.

Chris Wermann, of Abbey National, said: "You have to look at the quality of the business." He said that Ab-

bey National was not planning to offer any special deals to allow those who had mortgages with HMC to transfer to the Abbey. The interest rate was just a reflection of the risk involved, he said.

Borrowers with BNP, now part of Halifax Building Society, currently pay a rate of 7.99 per cent on their loans, equivalent to the rate offered by the society. They will not, however, benefit from free shares

in the planned flotation of the society. A spokeswoman said: "Borrowers in subsidiary companies will not get the benefits of the flotation."

Borrowers with two other centralised lenders, The Mortgage Corporation and National Home Loans, may well be hoping that their mortgages are taken over by another company.

TMC currently offers new and existing borrowers a rate of 8.85 per cent — nearly

one percentage point higher than the standard variable rate offered by many societies. A spokesman for TMC said that its parent, the US-based Salomon Brothers, had no intention of selling the mortgage book.

NHL, originally one of the biggest of the centralised lenders, offers new customers a rate of 7.95 per cent, while existing customers are charged between 7.75 and 11.89 per cent.

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Why going global could pay

In performance terms, the World Bank's IFC (International Finance Corporation) Composite Index of emerging markets is down 13.1 per cent for sterling investors so far

He says: "Chile, for example, is more like Singapore than Brazil or Peru, which are almost next door." Over the past ten years, as emerging markets have put in place tougher market regulations on one level and imposed stricter fiscal measures to combat runaway inflation on the higher economic plane, individual markets have attracted huge inward investment flows. Mr De Bolle points out, however, that while South-East Asian companies have on the whole produced steady year-on-year profit increases, Latin American firms have been much



Romania is on the road to investment with the opening of the Bucharest stock exchange

more volatile. That could be a plus over the next three to five years as Latin American companies find more room to become even more efficient. "The growth in Asia could surprise on the downside while Latin America has the capacity to surprise on the

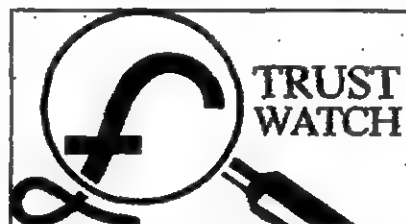
He also draws on his own experience of having lived in Brazil for 20 years. Between 1960 and the late 1970s, Brazil and South Korea more or less marched in step with steady, or even "fantastic", annual growth rates of between 7 and

10 per cent. But then their paths diverged dramatically with Korea keeping a steady hand on the tiller, while Brazil attempted to interfere in the markets, producing hyperinflation as a result.

On individual markets, Mr De Bolle is overweight in Latin America and therefore underweight in Asia, where the emphasis has changed from countries most closely linked to the US dollar, such as Malaysia and Thailand, in favour of those with more tenuous dollar ties such as India, Korea and Taiwan. In Latin America, favoured markets are Brazil, Peru and Colombia with Mexico neutral — although this could become more positive over the next six months — and possibly Argentina. The area in which F&C is now taking a much keener interest is Eastern Europe and, in particular, Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. Given time, Romania could join that list.

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Change of direction on the pension front

Sara McConnell on the growing trend for companies to switch to money-purchase schemes

Firms are cutting back on their pension provision for staff in an attempt to reduce their costs and shield themselves from investment risk.

Growing numbers of companies are insisting that new staff join money-purchase pension schemes, where the employee rather than the employer has to shoulder the risk, rather than more generous final-salary schemes.

On top of that, employers who previously paid the whole of the monthly contribution are asking staff to pay a part.

WH Smith, the retailer, is the latest to announce changes to its pension arrangements. From October 1, all staff must join its newly established money-purchase

scheme. An estimated 1,000 staff have been taken on since the beginning of October. By April, when they have the right to join the company's pension scheme, thousands more will have joined them. Unlike existing staff, they will have to contribute to their pension. They can pay up to 5 per cent of salary and WH Smith will match that sum with up to 5 per cent.

Existing staff will continue to belong to the company's final-salary scheme, under which pensions are based on a

proportion of that final sum. WH Smith pays all pension contributions up to 10 per cent of salary.

The National Association of Pension Funds (NAPF) gave a warning this week that more companies would follow WH Smith's example, or even stop providing pension schemes, if the Government continued to impose expensive regulatory requirements.

Much stricter rules governing pension schemes are set to be implemented when the Pensions Act comes into force

in April 1997. Colin Steward, the NAPF's director of parliamentary and international affairs, said: "It is voluntary to provide an occupational pension scheme, but each extra layer of government legislation adds to the cost."

Last year, fewer than 1 per cent of NAPF members moved from final-salary to money-purchase schemes, but the number is expected to increase.

But what are the differences between money-purchase and final-salary schemes? And should you be concerned if you are offered a money-purchase scheme?

The precise details of your benefits will depend on the wording of your scheme, but here are some general pointers.



FINAL-SALARY SCHEME

HOW it works: You and/or your employer make monthly contributions. But these do not directly influence the size of your final pension fund, as in a money-purchase scheme. Instead your pension is a proportion of final salary, up to a two-thirds maximum. Generous schemes pay 1/60th of salary for each year's service and less-generous 1/80th. If the pension fund's investments do not do well enough to pay this, your employer has to make up the difference.

The advantages

■ Your employer takes the investment risk, not you. Your pension is guaranteed to be a proportion of the final salary you are receiving at retirement or that you were receiving when you left the company.

■ If you die while you are still working, your dependants will get a lump sum based on salary plus typically half the pension you would have been paid based on your final salary when you die. If you have only been in a job a short time, you will still get a payout based on your final salary.

■ Your employer should be able to provide a full retirement pension if you are made redundant and retire early.

The disadvantages

■ You will be subsidising others in the firm, particularly those who are married or who die in service. Highly paid directors or others have been known to negotiate big rises just before they retire to push up their pension benefits. Final salary schemes benefit long stayers on high salaries most.

MONEY-PURCHASE SCHEME

HOW it works: You and/or your employer make monthly contributions. These are invested and managed, often by an external fund manager. The pension benefits you receive at the other end depend on how much you have put in and how well they have been invested. Your benefits are not defined by your final salary so you cannot predict what your final pension will be worth.

The advantages

■ If you are single and have no dependants, you are not cross-subsidising your married colleagues as you are in a final salary scheme. According to Ron Spill, of Legal & General, money-purchase schemes are "essentially fair" in that everyone has their own "pot" of money. In final salary schemes, you are contributing to the cost of death

benefits and early retirement for others in the firm.

■ If you are unmarried when you retire and have no dependants, you can use all the contributions you have built up to fund your own pension. In final-salary schemes, you will automatically pay for a dependant's pension and will not get any benefit if you do not marry. But money-purchase schemes have few advantages over final salary schemes for employees. They are attractive to employers because they limit costs.

The disadvantages

■ You, rather than your employer, take the investment risk. If your contributions are not well invested and skillfully managed, markets crash or there is rampant inflation, you will get a smaller pension. It is your

contribution which defines your pension, not your salary. Rodney Buse, group personnel director of WH Smith, concedes that moving to money-purchase schemes "does mean the investment risk does not fall on the company, but on the employee". But this can work both ways, with employees also benefiting from good performance.

■ If you die in service, your dependants will get a payout of the contribution pot you have built up to provide a pension. But he or she will only get what is there. If you have not had time to build up a pension, your dependants will not get much.

■ You have to use most of your pension fund to buy an annuity. With a money-purchase scheme, you have to buy the annuity and risk getting a bad rate if you retire when rates are low or choose the wrong provider.

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	Investment (\$)	Company	Standard Rate (%)
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	10,000	AIG Life	5.15
	20,000	AIG Life	5.20
	50,000	AIG Life	5.25
2 Years	5,000	AIG Life	5.28
	10,000	AIG Life	5.43
	20,000	AIG Life	5.48
	50,000	AIG Life	5.53
3 Years	1,000	Premium Life	5.30
	5,000	Swiss Life	6.00
	50,000	Swiss Life	6.20
4 Years	1,000	Premium Life	5.80
5 Years	1,000	Premium Life	6.00
	5,000	Swiss Life	6.50
	50,000	Swiss Life	6.70

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Britannia BS 01538 382608	Capital Trust	Postal	£2,000	5.60	Yr
Co-operative Bank 0345 252000	Peerfinder	Instant	£5,000	5.90	Yr
Leeds & Holbeck BS 0113 2438252	Albion	Postal	£10,000	6.00	Yr
Birmingham Midshires BS 0645 720721	First Class	Postal	£25,000	6.20	Yr

FIXED RATES	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Sun Banking Corp 01438 744505	Investment Cert	1yr bond	£1,000	6.80	FOR
Sun Banking Corp 01438 744505	Investment Cert	2yr bond	£1,000	6.80	FOR
Birmingham Midshires BS 0645 720721	Quantum Fixed	3yr bond	£5,000	7.25	FYF
Birmingham Midshires BS 0645 720721	Millennium Bond	4yr bond	£5,000	7.75	FYF

NOTICE ACCOUNTS AND BONDS	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Nottingham BS 0115 9481444	Postmark	7 day p	£2,500	5.80	Yr
Scarbrough BS 0800 505078	Scarbrough 50	50 day	£1,000	6.80	Yr
Nottingham BS 0600 930000	Postal 90 p	Postal 90 p	£10,000	6.80	Yr
Halford BS 0145 2233333	Special Prov	1 yr bond	£10,000	6.90	CN

CREDIT CARDS BEST BUYS

CREDIT CARDS	Card type	Interest per month	APR%	Fee per annum
Robert Fleming/S&P 0800 829024	MasterCard/Visa	0.98%G	12.40%	NIL
Robert Fleming/S&P 0800 829024	MasterCard/Visa	1.00%	14.80%	£11
Royal Bank of Scotland 0800 161616	MasterCard	1.14%	14.50%	NIL

PERSONAL LOANS BEST BUYS

PERSONAL LOANS	APR	Monthly payment on £3,000 for 3yr	
		with insurance	no insurance
Midland 0800 180180	15.40%	£116.54	£103.14
N&P BS 0800 808080	15.50%	£118.22	£103.28
Civildesale Bank 0800 240024	10.20%	£118.94	£103.35

Nb. A = Feeder account required. In the interest paid columns, C = no interest free period D = annual fee rebated £1.5K, charged per annum E = Annual fee waived for 1st year for new accounts F = fixed rate (all other rates are variable); O denotes interest paid on maturity

* RATES SHOWN ARE GROSS AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE
PLEASE CHECK RATES BEFORE INSERTING

Source: MoneyFacts, the Monthly Guide to Investment & Mortgage Rates (11992 500 677)

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FIXED RATE	Gross coupon	Buying price	Gross yield	Issue price	Minimum purchase amount
Birmingham Midshires	9.375%	98.04	9.553	100.17	1,000
Bradford & Bingley	11.625%	120.30	9.847	100.13	10,000
Bradford & Bingley	13.000%	134.06	9.678	100.20	10,000
Bristol & West	13.375%	136.93	9.752	100.34	1,000
Britannia	13.000%	132.56	9.785	100.42	1,000
Coverity	12.125%	122.89	9.772	100.75	1,000
First National	11.750%	124.58	10.262	100.32	50,000
Halifax	8.750%	92.80	9.440	100.62	50,000
Halifax	12.000%	125.30	9.387	100.26	50,000
Halifax	13.625%	143.08	9.504	100.00	50,000
Leeds & Holbeck	13.375%	136.46	9.779	100.25	1,000
Newcastle	10.750%	112.25	9.571	100.25	1,000
Newcastle	12.625%	131.98	9.571	100.46	1,000
Northern Rock	12.625%	133.61	9.428	100.14	1,000
Sipton	12.875%	133.31	9.636	100.48	1,000

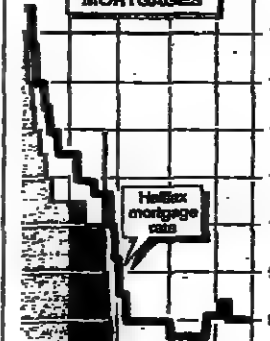
FLOATING RATE Gross coupon

Cheshire (28/03-28/09)	9.24766%	103.63	100.00	1,000
First National	9.30000%	100.75	100.00	1,000

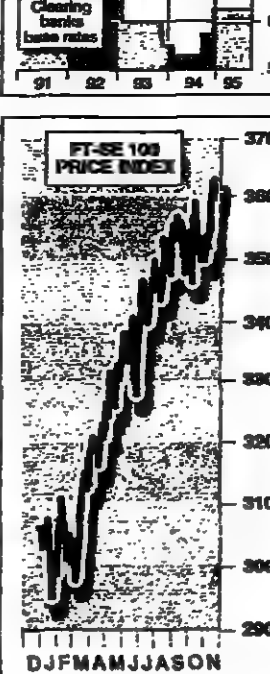
PIBS = Permanent interest-bearing shares

SHARE IN FOCUS: RAISE

BASE RATES V MORTGAGES



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NATIONAL SAVINGS

	Gross rate	At tax rates 25% 40%	Minimum annual investment £	Notice	Contact
Ordinary A/c	2.00	1.50 1.20	10-10,000		01161494545
Investment A/c	5.25	3.94 3.15	20-485	1mth	01161494555
Income Bond	6.50	4.88 4.00	2,000-24,999	3mth	0123576811
Fixed Rate Bonds	6.40	4.80 3.84	100-1,000	8day	0116362265
Fixed Income Certificate	5.85		25-1,000	1mth	01161632623
Children's Bonds	7.85			1mth	
East End Rate	3.51			8day	01161632623
Capital Bonds	7.75	5.81 4.65	100-10,000	8day	01191388440
8th Index Linked's	3.00		100-10,000	60day	0123576811

¹ First £70 (£140 p) of int tax free, inst accs for up to £100 ² Additional bids up to £20,000 in reinvested proceeds ³ Tax free ⁴ Rates gross and vble ⁵ Guaranteed when held for 5 years ⁶ Taxable but cred in full

PENSION ANNUITIES

All figures are the gross annual annuity (£100,000 purchase), guaranteed 5 years, paid monthly in advance

SINGLE LIFE (level ann)		Male:	Age 60	Age 65	Age 70
Prudential	Level		£10,377	£11,391	£12,755
Canada Life	Level		£10,130	£11,297	£12,677
Standard Life	Level		£10,136	£11,304	£12,680
Equi Life	Level		£10,277	£11,187	£12,385
Royal Life	Level		£10,047	£11,183	£12,782
SINGLE LIFE		Female:	Age 60	Age 65	Age 70
Prudential	Level		£9,625	£10,355	£11,425
Royal Life	Level		£9,913	£10,149	£11,385
Canada Life	Level		£9,303	£10,141	£11,385
Equi Life	Level		£9,305	£10,087	£11,975
Norwich Un	Level		£9,277	£10,025	£11,125
JOINT LIFE, 2/3 WIDOWS (level annuity)		Male:	Age 60	Age 65	Age 70
		Female:	Age 55	Age 60	
Prudential	Level		£9,237	£9,893	£10,595
Equitable	Level		£9,046	£9,583	£10,277
Scotiabank	Level		£9,929	£9,547	£10,400
Canada Life	Level		£9,890	£9,547	£10,470
Royal Life	Level		£8,956	£9,496	£10,415

Source: Agency Report 00171 508 89

Compiled by: Lizanne Rose

FIRST-TIME BUYERS

Lender	Interest rate %	Loan size	Max %	Notes
Building Societies				
Brad & Singley	1.80	no min/max	95	fixed to 1.10.86
0800 252 953				
Bristol & West	3.00	£15k+	95	4.74% discount for 12 months
0800 100117				8% disc 5 mths
Midpoint	1.84	£25-150k	95	1.75% disc 1 year
0330 446776				
Banks				
Midland Bank	3.29	£30k+	95	4.35% discount for 1 year
0500 494599				3.25% to 1.10.86
Royal Bank Scot	4.74	£15-150k	95	

Larger timbers, larger loads and first-drive buyers tables supplied by Blay's Guides Ltd.
Further information: Blay's Guides, 01753 880482.

GUARANTEED

For details of this bond, from a top ten building society, which gives you the best of both worlds:

0800 526 091

The FIA does not regulate building society investments

LINK-LINKED INSURANCE INVESTMENTS

[illegible]

3. A. J. 1950

THE TIMES WEEKEND MONEY LETTERS

Decision on repaying home loan depends on time and type

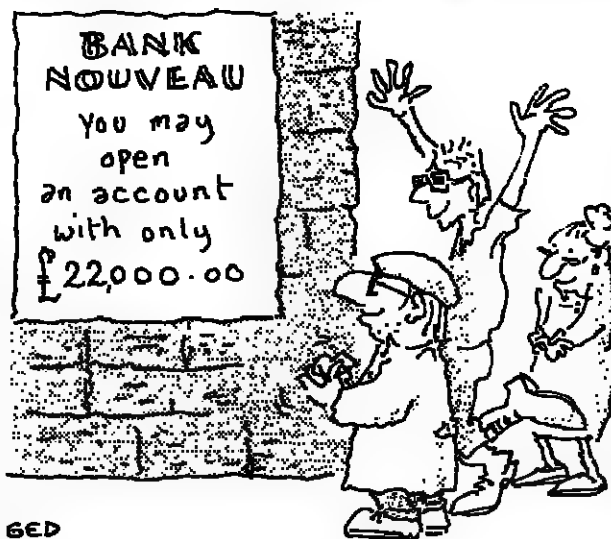
From Mr W. G. T. Jones

Sir, Contrary to the advice in "To repay or not to repay" (Weekend Money, November 18) it is unfortunately not simple to calculate whether it is worth paying off a mortgage. As stated, mortgage interest rates are inevitably higher than interest earned on savings. However, if you use a capital sum to repay part of your mortgage, presumably you will want to replenish your savings. With sufficient self-discipline, each month you can save the amount by which the mortgage payments have been reduced. This will accumulate over the remaining period of the mortgage, with compound interest, but will it reach as much as the original capital sum plus interest would have done?

The answer is — it depends. With an endowment mortgage, when the policy matures it will add to the monthly amount saved plus interest, assuming the policy payout exceeds the outstanding mortgage. Paying off a capital sum is then almost certainly a good

idea. With a repayment mortgage it is more complex. Using the interest rates in the article, a higher rate taxpayer paying off part of a repayment mortgage, but leaving over £30,000 outstanding, could see their savings recover if the mortgage has about 12 years or more to run. On the other hand, it is quite different for a basic rate taxpayer with an interest-only mortgage of less than £30,000. They will not get back to their starting point on savings for around 23 years (ignoring endowment policies). Repayment penalties, inflation and possible changes in interest rates complicate the issue even further.

Until the savings are replaced they cannot be used for other purposes. Any borrowing due to the lack of savings is likely to be at a much higher rate than for a mortgage. Paying off a mortgage helps the "feel-good" factor, but may not be the best financial decision. Yours faithfully, W. G. T. JONES, 1a The Drive, Radlett, Hertfordshire.



GED

Bank's demand on savings account balance

From Mr S. Read

Sir, Today I received a letter from my bank, HFC, telling me that unless I kept a balance of at least £1,000, the bank would close my savings account. The bank says it is doing this so that its interest rate for balances over £1,000 will remain competitive.

I am a small saver but increasingly I find that banks and building societies do not want my custom. Competition is supposed to benefit the customer. The banks' and building societies' so-called competition seems to benefit only the wealthy. I am one customer who certainly feels as if he has been "served". Yours faithfully, STEVE READ, 18 Meadow View, Water Eaton Road, Summertown, Oxford.

Ernie keeps to the basics

From Mr T. O'Brien

Sir, Your letter "Ernie should learn to communicate" (Weekend Money letters, November 18) set my antennae quivering. Many years ago, when you could buy single Premium Bonds, I sent one each with Christmas cards to about 15 nephews and nieces in Australia, and recently felt the need to write to Ernie for help.

A nephew had written to say he had found his bond in a house move, and as he had changed addresses several times since receiving it, wondered whom to notify. I wrote to Ernie asking for particular questions to be answered. In reply, I had a printed card asking him to complete it with his change of address. That and nothing more. Ernie should learn to communicate. Yours truly, TERENCE O'BRIEN, Innisfree, Seal Square, Selsey, Chichester, West Sussex.

Letters for Weekend Money may be sent by fax to 0171-782 5082.

Building societies find nice little earners when mortgage term ends

From Mr W. G. Gillow

Sir, Ivan Martin (Weekend Money letters, November 11), should consider himself lucky that his building society did not get possession of maturity funds from an assigned endowment policy.

My own mortgage with Bristol and West Building Society ended its 20-year term on November 3, and the associated endowment policy with Eagle Star Assurance matured at the same time. Funds from the insurance company were passed to the building society in good time, so that in the society's records my account was "cleared" a day early on November 2, by a deduction from those funds of

the original mortgage amount plus £54.60 — no explanation. Fine, but the remaining surplus of £10,500 from the endowment maturity value was not passed to me for a week — and then by a cheque through the post which, with a weekend in between, rendered this money inaccessible for nearly two weeks.

Additionally, I was astonished to find a direct debit for interest for the whole of November charged to my bank account — despite the society's record showing full redemption on November 2.

Yours truly, W. G. GILLOW, 25 Kingston Road, Nailsea, Bristol.

From Mr D. Pearson

Sir, Abbey National's charge of £50 "deeds handling fee" may seem unwarranted, but at least Mr Martin will get his deeds.

Lambeth Building Society proposes to charge me £30 "to cover the cost of production and dispatch of the title deeds" and £40 "deed sealing fee".

This is on redemption of a "top-up" mortgage. The Lambeth does not even have the deeds and never has done. They are held by the first mortgagee.

Yours faithfully, DAVID PEARSON, Moravia, Beech Grove, Amersham, Buckinghamshire.

A cheerier view of endowment insurance

From Mr B. E. Collins

Sir, I have no axe to grind in the matter, but I believe that your often repeated gloomy warnings about endowment life insurance policies are giving a distorted picture. Perhaps I can illustrate what a valuable savings medium this type of policy can prove, provided they are regarded as a long-term investment and are allowed to run to maturity.

This year, three with-profits endowment policies of mine have matured. The details are as follows:

Company	Start Yr	Premium/month	Term yrs	Sum Assured	Sum paid out
Standard Life	1970	£7.70	25	£2,000	£15,427
Equity & Law	1968	£12.55	27	£3,600	£28,338
GA/Yorkshire	1957	£4.40	38	£2,400	£40,013

The full picture is really better than that shown because the premiums are gross: I have disregarded the fact that I received tax relief on the premiums.

Yours sincerely, BRIAN E. COLLINS, The Orchard, Upper Weld, Airedale, Hampshire.

Pension policies where the payout disappoints

When, some years ago, insurance companies gave prospective policyholders an idea of the possible returns on their life insurance and pension policies, they had to be based, as now, on projections of returns, standard charges and inflation rates. The room for a mismatch between forecast and returns achieved was great. Many people may now well be retiring on pensions thousands of pounds below the amount anticipated.

Derek Pollitt's experience with an Eagle Star policy shows what can happen. Poor performance, and high



projections, conspired to produce a pension £17,000, or 26 per cent, lower than the £64,000 he expected.

Mr Pollitt, a former insurance broker, transferred the proceeds from his occupational scheme, about £15,000, into an Eagle Star with-profits scheme some 11 years ago. He was told

then that the amount would produce a fund which could reach £64,000, with an annual return of 13 per cent and terminal bonus of 15 per cent.

The value on maturity reached only £47,251. The annual investment returns did not meet expectations and the terminal bonus was scrapped. He says: "The whole idea of choosing a with-profits fund is to avoid the problems of a depressed stock market as bonuses, once allocated, cannot be withdrawn."

Eagle Star says the inflation figure projected was 9 per cent, against an average over the 11 years of about 5 per

cent. In a letter to Mr Pollitt, it said: "The actual maturity of the £47,251 represents an average annual return of 10.31 per cent, or a real return of 5.44 per cent allowing for inflation."

"We do not accept that the original quotation was misleading — the assumptions... were reasonable given expectations of inflation at that time."

The same amount invested in an equivalent Norwich Union pension would now be worth £68,000, and £69,737 with Sun Life.

CAROLINE MERRELL

The one that got away.

ARE YOU A TAXPAYER INVESTING FOR INCOME?

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For the life you don't yet know



THE TIMES SATURDAY NOVEMBER 25 1995

هكذا من الاصل

Firm end to the week

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

1995								1995							
Low Company				Price	Diff	%	PE	High Low Company				Price	Diff	%	PE
BANKS															
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Inspired streak puts Daly back in contention

FROM PATRICIA DAVIES
IN MELBOURNE

EARLIER this week, John Daly claimed that Australia was his second home, and yesterday the American golfer showed that he had indeed settled down. Daly had a run of six successive birdies in the course of a second-round 68, four under par, in the Australian Open at Kingston Heath, to post a halfway total of 141, three shots behind the leader, Peter McWhinney.

McWhinney, a Queenslander who missed 13 cuts in succession on the Japanese Tour this season, added a round of 70 to his opening 68, and attributed his success to a new "less technical" attitude.

Daly, the player with the techniques that cannot be taught and an improved attitude since he gave up drinking, had no idea what sparked his run of birdies, just as he was equally baffled by finishing with four bogeys. "I was in total shock after six birdies in a row from the 4th, and that finish is not what I had in mind," he said.

After eight birdies in 11 holes, Daly, who used his driver only three times, was leading the championship at seven under par, but he slipped back with that sloppy finish. At the 150-yard 15th, his tee-shot was buried in a bunker, he bunkered his second at the 16th, and wayward irons off the tee at the 17th and 18th led to two more dropped shots.

Greg Norman, who had been heavily critical of the greens after the first round, had 31 puts in a round of 69 that put him back in contention alongside Daly on 141. "My concentration was better, I was mentally prepared and I am glad to be back in contention to win on a golf course I enjoy," Norman said. "The course is in great shape."

Steven Richardson and Steven Bottomley, the Britons, missed the cut, but Gary Evans made it, just, on 148.

Scores, page 47



The victorious Hall and Coaker golfers celebrate their win. From left: Andy McClelland, Mick Stobbs, Andy Coaker and Danny Hall

Jokers enjoy successful Challenge

FROM MEL WEBB
IN LA MANGA

NOBODY could say they had not been warned. Hall and Coaker, winners of the first national final in *The Times* MeesPierson Corporate Golf Challenge in 1993, were grateful to their successors for looking after their trophy for them, but they would brook no foolishness. They were coming to La Manga to regain their title: yesterday they did so, and in considerable style, too.

Hall and Coaker, a firm of building contractors and surveyors from Sussex, went down as the happy champions on their first appearance in the final two years ago, and they did not change their approach here. They did not come to La Manga to lose, they were quick to say, but if grim earnestness was needed to win, then they would just as soon forget it.

The four laughing cavaliers — their captain, Andy Coaker, his business partner, Danny

Hall, Andy McClelland and Mick Stobbs — scored a highly impressive 90 Stableford points yesterday to finish with a total of 173 points, seven ahead of Data Connection, with Prebon Yamane, last year's winners, third with 163. This was not a mere victory, it was something close to annihilation.

Hall and Coaker started the day in second place, three points behind Prebon, but a combination of composed golf by themselves and a surprisingly diffident display by the leaders, who scored only 34 in the first nine holes, took Coaker's men to the turn five points ahead with 42 points, with Data Connection closing fast on the 1994 champions. Hall and Coaker got even better coming back, 48 points giving them a second-round score of 90, a record for the national final of this competition.

"We thought we would probably have to get pretty close to 90 to have any sort of



FINAL SCORES

173: Hall and Coaker 90, 83
163: Data Connection 78, 85
163: Prebon Yamane 86, 77
159: Cooperative Insurance Soc 74, 81
149: Unilever 74, 75
148: Chemical Corporation (UK) 71, 78
146: Allied Dunbar (Yorkshire) 74, 74
147: Lawson Mander Star 71, 75
146: Drakes Group 77, 69
142: Bolton Birch 74, 68

chance," Coaker said. "We decided that we were going to treat our round as 18 separate games — the important thing was to forget what we'd just done, think only about what we still had to do." It was a policy that paid rich dividends.

Prebon, meanwhile, tried

vainly to reproduce the performance that had taken them to 86 points the day before. "We never at any time put it together," Duncan Holdsworth, their captain, said. "We thought we would be able to cope with the pressure of the situation — after all, we had been here before — but we just couldn't cope. In the end I have to put it down to nerves."

Nerves may well have been on the agenda for Hall and Coaker, but if they were, they were never raised at the meeting. A bad shot was greeted in one of two ways: laughter combined with a deal of mick-taking, or lashings of very vocal encouragement.

The one necessary ingredient for success in any competitive endeavour is to be visited by a modicum of luck, and Hall and Coaker got their big break on the 1st hole. None of the four players hit the fairway, but somehow they managed to walk away from the green five points in credit. A lowly three followed on the

2nd, but then they were off and running; another three points did not appear on their card until the 17th, by which time they had to do no more than remain vertical to win.

They did not look at their score until they reached the halfway point, and then had the perfect kick-start to the home stretch when they scored seven points on the 10th.

Hall hit a good drive, gave it everything with his sand-iron for his second shot then sank a 15-foot putt for a net eagle two and four points. Stobbs, left-handed and talented, was in perfect position off the tee and then put a sand-iron to 12 feet. He did not have a shot, but a birdie three still gave him three points.

From that moment on, the trophy was theirs. Six weeks earlier they had said they were going to Spain to get back what was rightfully theirs. They are, as many have discovered in the last 48 hours, men of their word.

Partners driving in opposite Tour directions

FROM JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT
IN SAN ROQUE, SPAIN

IT WOULD be hard to find two men with more different golfing backgrounds than Maurice Besse, 22, and Stephen Gallacher, 21. Besse took up golf in 1989, by which time Gallacher had been playing for 12 years. In 1994, Gallacher, then playing off a handicap of three, became European amateur champion, while Besse had a handicap of one.

Gallacher is from Bathgate, in Scotland, Besse is from Abidjan, in the Ivory Coast.

They were paired together in the second round of the European Tour qualifying school yesterday, as they had been in the first, and their paths seemed to move in opposite directions.

Gallacher took a further step towards achieving one of the coveted cards for the PGA European Tour next year, despite hitting into seven fairway bunkers. He went round San Roque in 72, level par, and was an aggregate of one over par after 36 holes. Hitting long, straight shots that were unaffected by a nagging wind, he covered the last nine holes in 35.

Besse, meanwhile, took another step towards failing to get his card. His score was 73, and, like Gallacher, he played the inward half in 35. This was a toughy golf over the more difficult of the two courses being used for this competition, but as Besse had been eight over par the previous day, at Guadalmina's composite South Course, his cause is already lost.

It will take something completely unexpected for him to beat the 72-hole cut tomorrow night, when the field is reduced to 75. At present, he is joint 144th, while Gallacher is fourth.

Besse slumped in his chair in the afternoon sun. "No luck," he said. "No luck." Then he blew his cheeks out in a quintessentially French gesture. The world, Besse's body language seemed to suggest, was against him. He has no sponsor, and until a member

of Gallacher's travelling fan club from the Scot's home town offered to step in and pull his trolley, no caddy.

A few words of encouragement from Gallacher helped. "He strokes it well," the Scot said, showing that he was already well versed in prospect — an essential for someone about to embark on a career as a professional. "He is also sneaky long."

Besse put the tips of his long fingers together and peered through them at a glass of Coke. "Stephen Gallacher is very, very, very good," Besse said, in halting English. "He is good here," and he tapped his head and smiled a smile that seemed as wide as the 18th fairway. "For me, good head means good golf."

The 9th was Besse's worst hole. He described it thus:

Leading scores 47

"The drive right, second shot in the trees, three in bunker, four after green, chip, two putts." This added up to a seven on the shortest of the four par-fives.

The name Gallacher resounds throughout European golf because of the deeds of young Stephen and uncle Bernard, the captain of the Europe Ryder Cup team. The name Besse rings no bells. Not even the European Tour officials knew much about him.

Besse was one of nine children. His father was a pilot. He started playing golf at the 18-hole Abidjan Golf Club, and became so proficient at it that he quickly decided to abandon karate and tai kwando to concentrate on it.

Soon he was down to a handicap of one. "Yes," he said clearly and confidently, "I am the best player in the Ivory Coast. I no win the Ivory Coast Open, but I am the champion of the Ivory Coast. Tomorrow, I must go two or three under. Yes, I be very positive. Is OK. No luck today."

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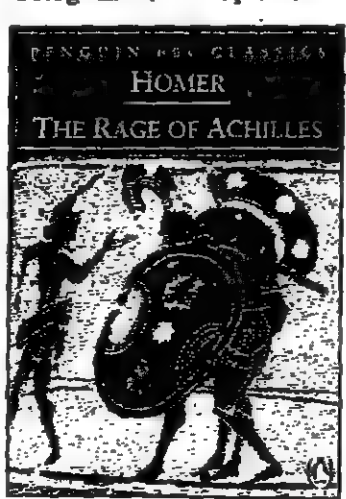
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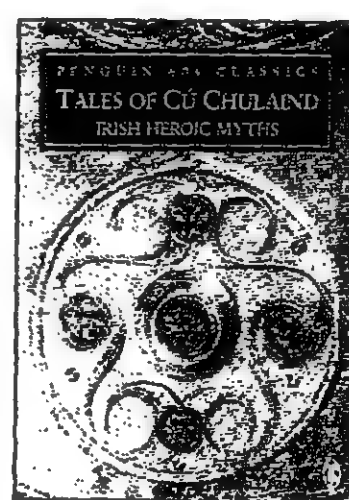
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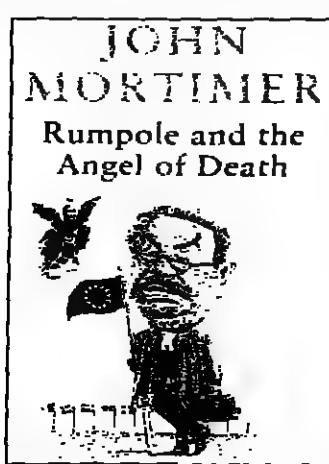


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Brolin in clear to make debut against Newcastle

BY RUSSELL KEMPSON

TOMAS BROLIN joined the FA Carling Premiership's ever-expanding foreign legion yesterday when his £4.5 million move from Parma, of Italy, was given the seal of approval by Uefa, football's European governing body. His international clearance came through in time for him to be to be eligible to play for Leeds United against Newcastle United, the leaders, at St James' Park this afternoon.

Howard Wilkinson, the Leeds manager, has bought Brolin to fill a support role behind Tony Yeboah, whose flurry of early-season goals has dried up. However, Brolin has been limited to only three appearances for Parma and four international matches for Sweden since a seven-month absence while recovering from a broken ankle.

Wilkinson declined to say whether Brinlin would play.

Ken Bates, the Chelsea chairman, yesterday accused Matthew Harding, his fellow

director, of lacking the business acumen needed to run the club. Bates, who has banned Harding from the directors' box at Stamford Bridge as their bitter power struggle rumbles on, insisted that he is still the man to lead

"I have a vision," Bates said. "You must remember that he [Harding] is not a businessman in the accepted sense of the word. He doesn't run a business, he runs an insurance broking business. When you're running a very complicated business, you have to have a different philosophy and have to have a proper business plan.

"It's one thing to tell the supporters that you're going to buy all kinds of players with fabulous money, but it doesn't tell you how you're going to run a business and

getting it on a proper basis. Two years ago, when he came along, I saw him as my sort of surrogate son and successor—I thought it would be ideal. I believe in evolution, not revolution; unfortunately, I think Matthew sees it the other way around."



21. They may be slow by continental standards, but perhaps they are on the more natural learning curve of professionalism.

The other day, Alex Ferguson, the manager of Manchester United, who is reckoned to have the finest crop of emerging talents in the land, took pains to "rest" David Beckham and Phil Neville. "They are still developing physically, and I have always been very sensitive to the dangers of burning out young players," Ferguson said.

from Simone, and a dash off his line to throw himself at the feet of Weah. The first put instinct before thought, the second had to be calculating and fearless. Weah's intent and power usually wins, but Buffon claimed the ball, and Weah needed medical assistance.

Perhaps when he is old, say all of 20, Buffon will know the hesitancy of fear. Perhaps the accumulation of bruises and the burden of expectation will take the edge off his game. But when he was interviewed, he simply dismissed the notion of fear. How could he have felt anything, nobody had told him until an hour before kickoff that he was playing.

The Buffons are quite an athletic brood. His mother held the Italian women's discus record for 17 years. She, like his father, was also a shot putter. His two sisters are first-class volleyball

players ... but it is a cousin of his father's in whose footsteps young Gianluigi Buffon is following.

Thirty-four years ago, Lorenzo Buffon won his first cap for Italy, playing in front of 60,000 at the Stade de Colombes in Paris. If the boy listens to his older relative, he will hear that there is sometimes a price to pay for hurling your body in the path of an oncoming opponent. Lorenzo Buffon had to be carried off in Rome in 1961 when he collided with Johnny Haynes, of England.

However, absorbing the family trade, Buffon has at least obeyed the dictum of Per Olof Astrand, a leading Swedish sports physiologist, who once opined that any youth aspiring to athletic greatness should be very careful when choosing their parents.

Ajax have become as practised at initiating teenagers as priests are at christening children. Patrick Kluivert and Nwankwo Kanu are almost veterans now, 19, but winners already of European Cup and Dutch league medals. On Wednesday, they bestrode the Bernabeu, the citadel of Real Madrid, dismantling the home side with ease and with the ruthlessness of the system that produces them.

They know that in the Ajax kindergarten, it is one small step into the Champions' League; they only have to look behind them, where Kiki Musampa, one of the younger boys who have already usurped some of the team from last year, directs the play. They look on the bench and see Dennis Schulp, 17, eagerly waiting for his chance. In Real

Madrid, once Europe's finest club, they also see Raul Gonzales, just 18, the key player of last season, and the scorer last Sunday of the only goal in the fierce Madrid derby.

Back home in Holland, never afraid to import, PSV are revelling again in Ronaldo, 18, their Brazil striker. He hit another hat-trick last Saturday, but only one goal against Werder Bremen in the Uefa Cup — somewhat obviously.

Even Great Britain is at it. Nottingham Forest, struggling against a 19-year-old playmaker for Lyons, Ludovic Giuly, finally brought on two inexperienced performers. Stephen "Bobby" Howe shot for goal, and after his effort was thwarted and the penalty was missed, Paul McGregor stole in with the winner. "Kids Save Forest" ran the headlines. Those kids are 22 and almost

'He felt no fear, for nobody told him he was playing until just before kick-off'

training and working, I want to relieve them from the pressure, both physical and mental, involved in playing football at Premiership level."

Do the youths see or feel these perceived pressures? They live, many of them, on goals, but youth is not exclusive to the predator. Parma, who share the *Serie A* lead in Italy with AC Milan, last Sunday appeared to spring the baby bloomer of the year by putting Gianluigi Buffon between the posts. However, Buffon, 17 years and 295 days, has the build, self-assurance and anticipation of a man twice his years.

Nothing that Baresi or Baggio, Weah, Boban and the rest of the AC Milan team could throw at Buffon caught him off his guard. He made two extraordinary saves in a minute — a one-handed stop

Buffon, the teenage Parma goalkeeper, stretches to defy AC Milan once more after being blooded in the match between the joint leaders of Serie A

<p>CHELSEA v TOTTENHAM</p> <p>Stanford Bridge Promotions presents in the true corner, "The Chelsea Season," and in the red corner, Matthew "Seriouly Rich!" Harding. Just what exciting new episode can these squabbling directors come up with next year? Yearn! Yearn from the boardroom intrigue, Chelsea will do well to Tottenham's impressive surge, with the Armstrong-Sheringham combination now having bedded it as comfortably as the Milne-Smith partnership of last season. Guilt for Chelsea, sadly, is doubtful.</p> <p>LAST SEASON: Chelsea 1 Tottenham 1. 10-YEAR RECORD: 2-0, 0-2, 0-0 —, 1-2, 3-2, 2-0, 1-1, 4-1, 1-1.</p> <p>How they line up:</p> <p>CHELSEA (from): D Kearney, R Gullis, D Patterson, E Johnson, D Lee, N Spensmore, M Dobson, G Hall, C Bailey, D Howe, E Newton, M Stain, P Curran, J Spencer, M Wright, S Taylor, A Jones, K Walker, J Smith. TOTTENHAM (from): I Waller, D Austin, D Willis, G Macmillan, E Sheringham, C Armstrong, R Rosenthal, C Calderwood, J Doozall, B Campbell, R Fox, J Edinburgh, G McIlroy, G Day.</p>	<p>COVENTRY CITY v WIMBLEDON</p> <p>Au revoir, Big Ron? The Coventry manager yesterday showed his cheerful side of confidence from his chairman, Bryan Richardson said: "Ron's future is not even a point for consideration and if we ever went down, God forbid, then I would still not be a point because of the calibre of the man." So there would not be even the slightest crack in Alkerson's armour if he led Coventry screaming into the English league League? Richardson must be a pig farmer, of the flying variety, in his time away from Highfield Road.</p> <p>LAST SEASON: Coventry 1 Wimbledon 1. 10-YEAR RECORD: —, 1-0, 3-3, 2-1, 2-0, 0-0, 0-1, 0-2, 1-2, 1-1.</p> <p>How they line up:</p> <p>COVENTRY (from): S Ogilvie, R Shaw, D Renfro, P Williams, M Hill, G Strachan, K Richardson, Ianston, J Salas, P McDowd, D Dublin, A Robinson, P Cook, J Flett, P Yelland. WIMBLEDON (from): P Hendriks, A Thoma, K Cunningham, A Pearce, J Goodman, V Jones, R Earle, A Kimble, A Clarke, G Perry, M Gayle, J East, M Harford, G Blissett, S Talbot.</p>	<p>EVERTON v SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY</p> <p>Barton are on a roll. Three successive wins in the Premiership, without a conceded, and Dunlop Ferguson has done his portage. Vinny Samways has also turned down joining Barry Fry's over-expanding troops at Birmingham, such is the new mood of optimism at Goodison Park. Wednesday, without a league win in four attempts, have resorted to employing Steve Nicol, signed SA, from North County. Strange move... unless David Platt has managerial plans for the former Scotland player.</p> <p>LAST SEASON: Everton 1 Sheffield Wed 4. 10-YEAR RECORD: 3-1, 2-0, 4-0, 1-0, 2-0, —, 0-1, 1-1, 0-2, 1-4.</p> <p>How they line up:</p> <p>EVERTON (from): N Southall, J Keaton, M Jackson, R Unsworth, D Watson, A Gerrard, A Hinchcliffe, A Kanekechili, B Home, J Ebner, J Finnan, A Lippert, A Kanekechili, S Stuart, P Redmond. SHEFF WED (from): K Pressman, I Nolan, L Briscoe, S Nicol, P Ashworth, D Walker, C Wade, G Hyde, D Frost, G Withamphay, A Sirron, M Degryse, M Bright, M Williams, J Watts, C Woods.</p>	<p>MANCHESTER CITY v ASTON VILLA</p> <p>Unbeaten in three Premiership fixtures, off the bottom of the table and ready to unveil its new £11 million, three-tier Kopex stand, Manchester City is abuzz with expectation again. Fly, them, that Villa are the victors. Aston Villa, after a year in charge, has pensioned off most of the ageing stars he inherited and transformed Villa into a youthful, spirited squad. Probably too much for City to handle with its first six chances, though, that somebody can teach Mancoski how to use his right foot? It is almost painful to watch.</p> <p>LAST SEASON: Manchester City 2 Aston Villa 2. 10-YEAR RECORD: 2-0, 3-1, 0-2, —, 0-2, 2-1, 2-0, 1-1, 3-0, 2-2.</p> <p>How they line up:</p> <p>MAN CITY E Imrell, S Lomas, K Curtis, G Kindred, N Quinn, G Pittorini, I Brightwell, K Symons, N Summerton, U Reider. Substitutes (from): A Carruthers, G Greaves, A Karagiasin, M Brown. ASTON VILLA (from): M Bosnich, U Ekogu, P McGrath, G Sougakis, G Charles, I Taylor, M Draper, A Wright, T Johnston, S Mikosovic, D Yorke, S Staunton, N Spinik, R Scimaceo.</p>																																																																																																									
<p>MIDDLESBROUGH v LIVERPOOL</p> <p>Middlesbrough have not won in four Premiership matches — even with the Brazilian brilliance of Juninho — and Liverpool have not won in three. At least Colquhoun has made his peace with Roy Evans, stopped sulking in the reserves and is now totally committed to Liverpool's cause until the real team is shipped. How convenient, for Evans and Colquhoun, that Ian Rush's long-term absence, because of injury, appears to have settled one of English football's most boring sagas. Get well soon, Rushie.</p> <p>LAST SEASON: Middlesbrough 1 Liverpool 1. 10-YEAR RECORD: —, 0-4, —, —, 1-2, —.</p> <p>How they line up:</p> <p>MIDDLESBROUGH (from): G Walsh, N Cox, C Morris, S Vidmar, N Pearson, N Ramsey, J Pollock, J A Fortit, P Stamp, C Little, Juninho. Substitutes (from): B Robson, A Moore, J Moreno, J Hendrick. LIVERPOOL: D James, R Jones, P Bebb, N Ruddock, M Wright, S Harrison, S McLennan, J McGeehan, J Barnes, R Foster, S Colquhoun. Subs (from): J Scaley, N Thomas, N Clough, M Kennedy.</p>	<p>NEWCASTLE UNITED v LEEDS UNITED</p> <p>So Brolin has finally received his international clearance and can play for Leeds. Good news for the Elland Road crowd, but so far how long? Howard Wilkinson agreeing to the get-out clause in his contract — that Brolin could leave if he didn't settle in Leeds — smacks of desperation. Just imagine little Tony's reaction when he has to sit on the substitutes' bench for the fourth consecutive match in deep mid-winter. "Er, Mr. Wilkinson, may I remind you of section F, sub-section 2, paragraph b). I'm off, bye-bye."</p> <p>LAST SEASON: Newcastle 1 Leeds 2. 10-YEAR RECORD: —, —, 3-2, —, —, 2-2, —, —, —, 1-1, —, 1-2.</p> <p>How they line up:</p> <p>NEWCASTLE (from): S Hilop, W Barton, J Beresford, D Peacock, S Hawley, K Gillespie, R Lee, L Clark, D Glavin, D Bourdsley, L Ferdinand, S Watkin, S Sellers, R Elliott, P Smirak. LEEDS (from): J Lukic, G Kelly, D Whithams, R Jobson, A Desno, A Kelso, S McLennan, G Palmer, G Speed, T Brobin, B Deane, A Yokozaki, N Worthington, P Bessey.</p>	<p>SOUTHAMPTON v BOLTON Wanderers</p> <p>Down at The Dell, much depends on the fitness test that Barry Venison will have on his dodgy back shortly before kick-off. The three matches in which he has played since returning from a cut-throat operation in Turkey, Southampton have won; in the two he has not, Southampton have lost. An important signing by Dave Merrington. More curious is the new central defence offered to Alan Stubbs, the Bolton defender, who has spent most of the past six months trying to leave Burnley Park. Must be a funny game, a la Brolin, somewhere.</p> <p>LAST SEASON: No fixture. 10-YEAR RECORD: No fixture.</p> <p>How they line up:</p> <p>SOUTHAMPTON (from): D Bennett, J Dodd, F Bernall, R Hall, K Monkus, T Widdington, M Le Tissier, J Magilton, N Shipperley, G Watson, N Heaney, D Hughes, F Barnett, M Madisson, B Grobblebar. BOLTON (from): K Branagan, C Fairclough, G Bergeson, G Taggart, S Green, S Carole, A Todd, M Paterson, P Phillips, A Thompson, J McGinty, A Davison, S McNasprie, R Sneekes, A Stubbs.</p>																																																																																																										
<p>WEST HAM UNITED v QPR</p> <p>Mark Hateley, who minutes after he joined Rangers from Rangers for \$1 million, may be spotted in the Premiership for the first time this afternoon. He has recovered from injury and could come in to bolster an attack that has yielded only two goals in five games. West Ham, only one defeat in eight, are without a home win, but have scored Rio Ferdinand, cousin of Newcastles' Rio, like a lion against non-dunnish country, is a centre half and has scored in all five contacts.</p> <p>LAST SEASON: West Ham 1 QPR 0. 10-YEAR RECORD: 1-0, 3-0, 0-0, —, 2-2, —, 0-4, 0-0.</p> <p>How they line up:</p> <p>WEST HAM (from): M McDonald, S Smith, K Rowland, A Martin, M Ripser, J Bishop, D Williamson, S Jordan, D Hughes, P Roberts, C Collins, R Slade, J Rossiter, S Skelton, J O'Brien, S Graydon, S Staniland, J Schuster, J Sommer, A Robertson, J Ready, S Yates, D Maddox, A McDonagh (from), J Barrett, C Innes, S Barker, N Zeko, M Brazier, T Skidler, R Williams, M Hateley, J Holloway, S Osborn, D Dixon, K Gallen.</p>	<h2>HOW THEY STAND</h2> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>P</th> <th>Pts</th> <th>Goal diff</th> <th>Recent form</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1 Newcastle</td><td>14</td><td>35</td><td>+21</td><td>-WDWW</td></tr> <tr><td>2 Manchester Utd</td><td>14</td><td>32</td><td>+18</td><td>WLWWW</td></tr> <tr><td>3 Arsenal</td><td>14</td><td>27</td><td>+11</td><td>WLWLW</td></tr> <tr><td>4 Aston Villa</td><td>14</td><td>27</td><td>+9</td><td>LWNWD</td></tr> <tr><td>5 Tottenham</td><td>14</td><td>25</td><td>+5</td><td>DOWNW</td></tr> <tr><td>6 Ipswich</td><td>14</td><td>24</td><td>+14</td><td>WDLWD</td></tr> <tr><td>7 Norwich</td><td>13</td><td>24</td><td>+5</td><td>LDLDD</td></tr> <tr><td>8 Nottingham Forest</td><td>13</td><td>24</td><td>+3</td><td>WWDM</td></tr> <tr><td>9 Middlesbrough</td><td>14</td><td>23</td><td>+4</td><td>WLDDL</td></tr> <tr><td>10 Blackburn</td><td>14</td><td>19</td><td>3</td><td>LLDWL</td></tr> <tr><td>11 Leicester</td><td>14</td><td>18</td><td>0</td><td>LLLWL</td></tr> <tr><td>12 Blackpool</td><td>14</td><td>17</td><td>+5</td><td>DWLWL</td></tr> <tr><td>13 West Ham</td><td>14</td><td>17</td><td>2</td><td>DWLWD</td></tr> <tr><td>14 Sheffield Wed</td><td>14</td><td>13</td><td>-5</td><td>WLDDD</td></tr> <tr><td>15 Southampton</td><td>14</td><td>12</td><td>-11</td><td>LWLWL</td></tr> <tr><td>16 QPR</td><td>14</td><td>11</td><td>-11</td><td>LDLDD</td></tr> <tr><td>17 Wimbledon</td><td>14</td><td>11</td><td>-14</td><td>LLLLD</td></tr> <tr><td>18 Manchester City</td><td>14</td><td>9</td><td>-15</td><td>DLLWW</td></tr> <tr><td>19 Bolton</td><td>14</td><td>9</td><td>-15</td><td>TLWSW</td></tr> <tr><td>20 Coventry</td><td>14</td><td>6</td><td>-18</td><td>LLLPL</td></tr> </tbody> </table>				P	Pts	Goal diff	Recent form	1 Newcastle	14	35	+21	-WDWW	2 Manchester Utd	14	32	+18	WLWWW	3 Arsenal	14	27	+11	WLWLW	4 Aston Villa	14	27	+9	LWNWD	5 Tottenham	14	25	+5	DOWNW	6 Ipswich	14	24	+14	WDLWD	7 Norwich	13	24	+5	LDLDD	8 Nottingham Forest	13	24	+3	WWDM	9 Middlesbrough	14	23	+4	WLDDL	10 Blackburn	14	19	3	LLDWL	11 Leicester	14	18	0	LLLWL	12 Blackpool	14	17	+5	DWLWL	13 West Ham	14	17	2	DWLWD	14 Sheffield Wed	14	13	-5	WLDDD	15 Southampton	14	12	-11	LWLWL	16 QPR	14	11	-11	LDLDD	17 Wimbledon	14	11	-14	LLLLD	18 Manchester City	14	9	-15	DLLWW	19 Bolton	14	9	-15	TLWSW	20 Coventry	14	6	-18	LLLPL
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<p>ARSenal v BLACKBURN ROVERS</p> <p>Jack Walker-Promotions, in conjunction with Hollywood Entertainment, present in the blue and white corner, David "Bossed Up" Betty, and in the red-faced corner, Eric</p>																																																																																																												

Rough Quest to deny One Man

By RICHARD EVANS, RACING CORRESPONDENT

ONE MAN, the Desert Orchid lookalike with a jumping style to match, will attempt to escape from the suffocating cocoon of potential stardom at Newbury today by emulating the mighty Arkle and winning the Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup for a second successive year.

If the Gordon Richards-trained grey, already as low as 8-1 for the Cheltenham Gold Cup, is successful, the flamboyant seven-year-old will not only become the new steeplechasing idol but he could also help to fill the void left in the hearts and minds of many National Hunt followers since the retirement of "Dessie".

However, the "if" surrounding his chances is far bigger than the miserly odds — as short as 6-4 — being offered by the bookmakers and he is worth opposing for a variety of reasons, not least his poor betting value.

The statistics are stacked against One Man. The Hennessy is a graveyard for favourites, with no market leader having obliged in the past decade, and no horse at 2-1 or shorter having won since 1980. Similarly, no runner has carried more than 11 stone to victory during the past ten years and the last time a winner successfully carried a penalty, incurred for winning a race after the Hennessy weights are published, was also in 1980.

Although One Man jumped in spectacular style when defeating Jodami on his seasonal reappearance at Ayr two weeks ago, the equally spec-

tacular blunders on his previous two starts — in the Racing Post Chase and Rowland Meyrick last season — remain a worrying mystery. Significantly, he is unlikely to have the space and freedom up front today, which he enjoyed at Ayr, with the Nigel Twiston-Davies-trained trio of Young Hustler, Earth Summit and Grange Brake looking sure to set a demanding pace. That could cramp his style.

Add to that the injury to One Man's regular jockey, Tony Dobbin, and the doubts grow. Mark Dwyer is a more than

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: Conquering Leader (1.50 Newbury)
New best: Shaikar (3.30 Newbury)

capable replacement but today will be the first time he has ridden the horse in a race. In the circumstances, it must be worth opposing the favourite. Young Hustler, so impressive at Aintree last Saturday, again has his sights set on the Grand National next year. The consistent eight-year-old will be difficult to keep out of the first three, but top weight of 12 stone (including a 4lb penalty) and the absence of fast ground may deny him the winner's enclosure.

If the rain arrived in sufficient quantity, Earth Summit would be a strong fancy but he could just lack the necessary speed in this race.

Although Martin Pipe's

Chatham is weighted to reverse recent Haydock form with Couldnt Be Better, the Charlie Meyrick runner is younger, progressive and should confirm the placings. Somewhat surprisingly, Graham Bradley has opted to ride Black Humour, the second Brooks runner, who is making his seasonal debut.

Rough Quest, a much-improved horse this year, looks to have outstanding each-way claims. After winning the Ritz Club Handicap at Cheltenham, he confirmed the improved form by following up at Punchestown. On his seasonal reappearance at Cheltenham, the Terry Casey-trained nine-year-old was in the process of running an excellent race when falling four fences out.

"Mick [Fitzgerald] said he was travelling so strongly he decided to take a slight pull going into the fence because he didn't want to dispute the lead too early. As a result, Rough Quest was watching the other two horses and took a tumble," Casey explained yesterday.

However, Rough Quest is none the worse for that fall, has schooled well for Jamie Osborne, who replaces the suspended Fitzgerald, and there is no mistaking the stable confidence behind the second favourite.

"He's in very, very good form. This horse is well, take it from me," Casey added. "He's done a lot of work and I've been quite hard on him, but he thrives on it. He has a great constitution and he's tough. I am very hopeful."



Rough Quest, a Cheltenham Festival winner, is fancied for today's Hennessy Gold Cup

Clifton Beat can gain revenge

NEWBURY
BBC1

1.15 Clifton Beat finished 14 lengths behind Kissair in the Triumph Hurdle last season but this race-fit hurdler can take his revenge. Twice a winner at this track, the four-year-old just failed to hold Atours at Wincanton last time. Killoran Abbot looks sure to win races this term, but probably over further, or on softer going, while Fourth In Line progressed well last season.

1.50 Nicky Henderson's Conquering Leader is a confident choice. She was beaten two lengths by Jibber The Kibber in a fast-run Tote Silver Trophy at Cheltenham but reappears on 12lb better terms and also steps up in distance, which looks sure to suit. Cab On Target and Jibber The Kibber look the dangers.

2.25: see left.

NEWCASTLE
CHANNEL 4

2.10 Emerald Storm has benefited from the move north and, after winning at Kelso on his reappearance, improved again when finishing second behind Whaaf Fettle on the same course. Fiveleigh Builds was seven lengths away in third while Deep Decision jumped round safely at the back of the field. He should have improved for that gentle introduction and looks well handicapped. Son Of Iris has scope for improvement.



TODAY'S RACES ON TELEVISION

2.40: Chief Minister did particularly well on his first run of the season at Cheltenham, finishing a close third in a fast-run race, with Padre Mio and Home Counties several lengths behind. The six-year-old, twice a winner at this track last season, looks fairly handicapped. Kadastoff, who fell early in the Cheltenham race, would appreciate softer going.

3.10: McGregor The Third, impressive winner of novice events at Carlisle and Newcastle before comfortably winning the cross-country chase at Cheltenham, looks to have a simple task. Seven Towers is an interesting debutant over fences.

3.40: Little Bromley improved with every run last term and goes well for Tony Manners. She could run well but the race fitness of Stay Awake can make a big difference. Mary Reveley's runner ran especially well behind Keep Your Distance here three weeks ago.

RICHARD EVANS

NEWBURY

THUNDER

12.45 Berude Not To 1.15 Kissair 2.25 Rough Quest 3.00 Gales Cavalier 3.30 SHANKAR (nap)
The Times Private Handicapper's top rating: 3.30 SHANKAR.

GOING: GOOD SIS
12.45 FULKE WALWYN CHASE (€5,803, 2m 4f) (4 runners)
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1994: THE PRINCE OF PLEASURE 6-11-10 J. Dobbin 11-10

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FORM FOCUS

ISSAR best Silver Wedge (2m) at Daily Express through hurdle at Cheltenham (2m) in 1994. STOMPAH best over hurdles at Newbury (2m) in 1994. CLIFTON BEAT best over hurdles at Newbury (2m) in 1994. FULKE WALWYN CHASE best over hurdles at Newbury (2m) in 1994. BERUDE NOT TO best over hurdles at Newbury (2m) in 1994. CASTLE COURT best over hurdles at Newbury (2m) in 1994. GO BALLYSHILL best over hurdles at Newbury (2m) in 1994. SHANKAR best over hurdles at Newbury (2m) in 1994.

RACING NEXT WEEK

MONDAY: Kater (first race, 1.00), Wolverhampton (AW, 2.10), Worcester (12.50).
TUESDAY: Farnham Park (1.15), Newbury (1.20).
WEDNESDAY: Catterick Bridge (1.00), Hereford (12.50), Lingfield (AW, 1.10).
THURSDAY: Lingfield (AW, 1.15), Leicester (1.20), Windsor (1.20).
FRIDAY: Exeter (1.20), Sandown Park (12.50), Southwell (AW, 1.10).
SATURDAY: Cheltenham (BBC, 1.00), Sandown Park (CA, 12.50), Towcester (12.50), Wetherby (12.40), Wolverhampton (AW, 1.50).
Rat meetings in bold

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Free bet is a £10 Straight Forecast on the Hennessy Gold Cup today. (Please place your bet and make your free forecast selection within the same call.)

HENNESSY GOLD CUP
3 miles 2 1/2 furlongs, Newbury 2.25 pm, live on BBC TV.
6/4 One Man
4/1 Rough Quest
6/1 Couldnt Be Better
13/2 Earth Summit
10/1 Young Hustler
12/1 Black Humour
12/1 Chatham
25/1 Cogent
25/1 Monsieur Le Cure
25/1 Superior Finish
66/1 Bishops Hall
66/1 Givus A Buck
66/1 Grange Brake
Each way One Quarter the odds a place 1/2, 3/4 Price subject to fluctuation. Available up to First Show. Tattersalls Rule 4 (if any) apply. Non-runner - no bet.

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PRICES SUBJECT TO FLUCTUATION

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1994: THE PRINCE OF PLEASURE 6-11-10 J. Dobbin 11-10

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Saturday portrait: Salim Malik by Michael Henderson

Exoneration leads to isolation for man at centre of cricket drama

The cameras were rolling at Melbourne airport the other day, waiting for Pakistan's cricketers to disembark from Hobart. The man they had come to photograph had not played in a fortnight, but as the players strolled towards the arrivals lounge, the producer made sure that he caught what his crew had come for, a shot of Salim Malik.

It has been the same story since the Pakistan party arrived in Australia for a three-Test series that they have already surrendered. The final game, which begins in Sydney on Thursday, is now irrelevant. Australia, winners by an innings and 126 runs in Brisbane and by 155 runs in Hobart, have summarily sentenced the team that beat them last year on the sub-continent, when Salim, the opposing captain, recorded the remarkable aggregate of 557 runs. The four-day game against Victoria began without him, but Intikhab Alam, the tour manager, is desperate for Salim to play at Sydney.

Although he may not confer his blessing on it, Salim, 32, will undoubtedly recognise the Chinese greeting: "May you live in interesting times." In the past year, increasingly to the irritation of everybody in cricket, he has hogged the limelight. The good conduct of both groups of players during the present series, which reflects favourably on the captaincy of Mark Taylor and Wasim Akram, cannot disguise the fact that Salim is the central character of an unappealing drama that began in Karachi 14 months ago.

Evelyn Waugh had just the phrase for Salim's state of mind: "The fashionable agonies of angst." The former Pakistan captain — no fewer than five men have held the job this year alone — went on record after the Brisbane Test, saying that all he did was sit in his hotel room, watching television and kicking off the days. Despite injuring his left hand in that match holding a catch to dismiss Taylor, an injury that kept him out of the second Test, he remains a member of the touring party; on the fringes, perhaps, but still part of it.

Salim's arrival in Perth, after the other players had reached Australia, was covered as though it was a State visit. A judicial commission in Pakistan had just declared the charges laid against him earlier this year by three Australian players to be groundless, and the way was clear for his restoration to the Test side. Less happily, the Pakistan authorities followed up with a verbal volley at the truthfulness of the Australians, an attack subsequently toned down.

The written submissions from Shane Warne, Tim May and Mark Waugh focused on events during the first Test of the series last year, which Pakistan won by one wicket. Salim was alleged to have approached Warne and May in the hotel that the teams shared, offering them about £33,000 for

'He cuts a lonely figure, ignored by his accusers and no longer a voice in his own dressing-room'

throwing the match. Waugh also claimed that he was offered an unspecified amount, in American dollars, by Salim before a one-day game. The Australians declined to go to Pakistan for questioning, feeling that they had supplied all the evidence that was necessary.

It is useful to bear in mind that their tour of Pakistan was partly a bridge-building exercise. Mindful of the bad blood in the past, particularly a rancorous series in 1988, when Allan Border was captain, there was a conscious effort during Taylor's first series as captain to play down the differences that have always kept these opponents far apart. It was not until Australia returned home to play England that rumours of skulduggery materialised as direct allegations against the Pakistan captain.

The echoes of those allegations, after the apparent toothlessness of

the International Cricket Council in getting to grips with an incident that could hardly be more threatening to the game's image, continue to resonate. It is impossible to quantify but it may be due in part to their portrayal as liars that Australia have played such dead-eyed cricket in the past month. By letting their deeds do service for their thoughts, they have supplied an unequivocal answer.

It was predictable that Warne and Salim would confront each other directly in the first Test, and poetic justice that the Australian should win both battle and war. Salim had impugned Warne's dignity, boasting that he could pick the leg spinner's deliveries, and it is true that on the slower, blander pitches in Pakistan, Salim was rarely troubled. On the faster pitches of Australia, where Warne is king and courted into one, he was being naughtily.

Salim, who damaged his hand on the first day of the Test and sat out Pakistan's first innings, ducked the encounter until the fourth day. When it came, it did not last long. Attempting to turn his fourth ball to leg, Salim lobbed a catch to mid-off, where Craig McDermott held on, giving Warne and his team-mates a wicket that they celebrated without restraint.

In view of the way Pakistan prepared for that Test, disrupted by events on and off the field in recent months — including a first series defeat by Sri Lanka before this tour — it might have been better if Salim had stayed at home. He cuts a lonely figure, ignored by the Australians and no longer a significant voice in his own dressing-room. For all that, he remains the senior batsman in a team full of greenhorns, and it is to him that Pakistan look for stability — if he is fit — when the caravan comes to Sydney.

Salim has made 13 hundreds, the first on his debut at 18, in 85 Tests, at an average of 45, so he has a decent record. The son of a Punjabi, he was introduced to cricket at 12 and bowled leg spin before a coach at the Victoria Club persuaded him to concentrate on batting. He was taught



early to eliminate risky shots, and his batting is characterised by playing the ball in the arc between mid-on and mid-off.

He has not always been an unpopular cricketer. At Essex, where he spent a productive summer in 1991, he fitted snugly into a club that was then the most harmonious in England. He understood as much English as it suited him to know, but that is by no means unusual.

England proved more a test of Salim's temperament than technique. He admitted then to having a short temper but learning patience at the crease. Indeed, perhaps Salim's best batting for Pakistan came in 1987, the first time they won a Test series in England, against a team that had just won in Australia. He was out for 99 at Headingley, but Pakistan won the Test, the only victory that season. Later that year, in

Faisalabad, came the incident involving Mike Gatting, the England captain, and Shikoor Rana, the umpire, that has blighted relations between the countries to this day.

Salim is no stranger to controversy. In 1992, the Headingley Test was contentious for his injudicious remarks about the quality of the England bowlers and the umpires. And the present affair is not necessarily dead. Pakistan is one

of three stages when the World Cup begins in February, and Salim will probably be a member of the team that tries to defend it. The pressure on Pakistan to retain the cup is enormous, and the final is scheduled for Lahore. Salim's home city. Scarcely a day goes by in Australia without Wasim or Intikhab mentioning that the main purpose of the itinerary this winter is getting the team right for the World Cup.

Southgate wait on Soma Singh

SOUTHGATE are at full strength for their important National League hockey match against the leaders, Old Loughtonians, tomorrow, but will take a late decision on whether to field Soma Singh, who played for Great Britain against Argentina on Thursday and who is due to turn out in the second international match today at Chiswick (Sydney Friskin writes).

Soma Singh, the Southgate captain, was out of action for several weeks early in the season, and decided to answer Great Britain's calls in order to prove his fitness. Cannock, who are on the heels of the leaders, are prepared for a tough match against Barford Tigers, who, with home advantage, cannot be taken lightly, as was seen last week when they came

back from 5-0 down to 5-4 against Guildford. Phillip McGuire, who has missed most of Teddington's matches this season because of a back strain, will take the field for a brief spell in the home match against East Grinstead. Nicklin and Sully will be missing from the Teddington attack because of injury problems, but Gibbins is fit again.

Fraser puts Britain in clear sight of Atlanta

Great Britain 2
Argentina 2

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN CAPE TOWN

A SUBTLE signal from the bench by Great Britain's coach, Steve Slocumbe, was all that her side required for Sue Fraser to slam in a late equaliser from a penalty corner in the Olympic Games qualifying tournament in Cape Town yesterday.

Slocumbe said that she had been very nervous before the match, knowing that her team needed to earn at least a point to make almost certain of qualification. A draw against South Africa today will be enough for them to book their accommodation in Atlanta.

As the seconds ticked away and her team threw everything at the World Cup silver medal-winner in search of the equaliser, Slocumbe said that she had remained absolutely focused on the match. "I never even thought about the result," she said. "I was just concerned about the job the players had to do on the pitch. I can't afford to let my anxiety affect them."

There were few worrying moments in the opening stages as Mandy Nicholls glanced in a Fraser free hit to put Britain 1-0 ahead in the fourteenth minute. However, a combination of poor passing and sloppy marking gave Maria Paula Castelli the opportunity to give Argentina a 2-1 lead when she hit rebound goals ten minutes either side of the break.

In a frantic late flurry, Mariana Arana in Argentina's goal made two splendid saves from Anna Bennett and Jane Sixsmith, before Fraser's thumping drive rescued Britain.

Smith gets chance to confirm his fitness

FROM PAT GIBSON IN LAHORE

TWO of the most respected bowlers in county cricket, Mike Smith, of Gloucestershire, and Tim Munton, of Warwickshire, will share the new ball for England A in their three-day game against Pakistan's XI, which starts here today, knowing that one of them will be on his way home next week.

Munton has only just arrived as cover for Smith, who had bowled 3.1 overs of left-arm swing in the first four-day game of the tour, nearly three weeks ago, when he broke down with a recurrence of an intercostal injury. He has not played since.

Now he has to convince the England A management that he is fit to play a full part in the rest of the tour instead of wandering around with his camera, looking for all the world like a tourist. If he can, Munton's job will be over within a week.

There could also be a contest between Dominic Ostler and Jason Pooley, who are expected to be given opportunities to claim a batting place in the side for the second international at Rawalpindi next Thursday. To make room, Keith Piper, the only wicketkeeper in the party, may be rested, in which case Ostler and Anthony McGrath, will alternate, session by session, with the gloves.

It has been rumoured that Abdul Qadir, the famed Pakistan leg spinner, may captain the opposition but that seems unlikely. Even if he is fit, Qadir, now 40, would be a strange choice to lead a representative team only a week after he took part in a demonstration against the policies of the Pakistan Cricket Board.

The protesters do seem to have a point. Further evidence of the shambolic state their game appears to be in came yesterday with the announcement that their A team will play in a one-day tournament in Sharjah between December 5 and December 12, even though the third and final international against England A is due to start in Peshawar on December 8.

Carrying weight in the business of drug bans

THERE are some people who are foolish enough to believe that there is a drug problem in weightlifting. This is nonsense. Drugs, yes. But no problem. Four of the top weightlifting nations had more than two positive tests for anabolic steroids over the past year. For this, the entire nation can be banned from competition. The International Weightlifting Federation general secretary, Tamas Ajan, has come down like a ton of bricks on these offending nations. "I gave them a very strong warning," he said.

Ooh-er. The nations in question are the weightlifting powerhouses of Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Armenia and Russia. Under the sport's legislation the nations are not permitted to compete in the world championships, at present being held in Guangzhou, China, or in the Coca-Cola Olympics next year. But there is a get-out clause.

It is called \$50,000 (about £33,000). Pay up and all is forgiven. And all four have coughed. Well, weightlifting folk argue, if you left Bulgaria or former Soviet republics out, the notion of a world championships would be meaningless. A steroid-chomping free-for-all is, of course, highly meaningful. Fifty grand is a lot of money for an amateur federation: there are rumours that it comes from the mafias that now flourish in the ruins of the bankrupt economies... mafias in which, it is alleged, former weightlifters have a big say.

Holding off

Goalkeeper of the week is David McAllister. He is 49, and last week he made a comeback to premier division lacrosse, and starred as Mellor beat Timperley 16-1. Meanwhile, the inadvertent goalie of the week is Bruno Giammetti, an outfielder who played for Thatcham Town against Petersfield in football's Wessex League. His team won 4-1, but Giammetti was sent off for deliberate handball. Thatcham's manager, Jim Greenwood, said: "It was a diabolical decision. When the ball's travelling at 30mph at your groin, what's your immediate reaction?"



SIMON BARNES
On Saturday

By George

More Magic Numbers continue to come in, but I have still more bottles of gorgeous Nicolas Feuillate champagne to offer for those who come up with more. Latest suggestion is 425,000 for the great George Graham. Send me your Magic Numbers, and the champagne will be flying in your direction.

Vintage Gazza

"I haven't had a beer for



months." Gazza said the other day. "If I drink at all, it's wine or champagne. I am studying books about wine and I am becoming a bit of a wine buff. The guzzling days are gone, and my only lapse is to have a few toffees." Which go down very well with a robust claret. These revelations come from *Healthy Eating* magazine. "I just will not be beaten," Gazza adds. "I'm hungrier than ever."

Name game

Well, Major League Soccer, the all-American venture into real football, is still tottering along, and scheduled for an actual start, believe it or not, in April. As many as ten clubs are likely to be involved. Here is the latest roll-call: New England Revolution, Columbus Crew, NY/NJ MetroStars

(named because only tough guys ride the Subway), Tampa Bay Mutiny, Washington DC United (good name), Dallas Burn, Colorado Rapids, Kansas City Wiz, San Jose Clash, and LA Galaxy. Better suggestion, LA Jays: 8-0 down in the 85th minute but always given nine penalties.

Romario ruckus

Let us not be too censorious about the on-field punch-up between Graeme Le Saux and David Batty in midweek. In Brazil, team-mates of still greater eminence, if such a thing is possible, are hard at it in the Rio newspapers. Flamengo keep losing and worse, no one is going to watch them. They are down to gates of 800, and Zico has said: "The blame for the current chaos at Flamengo is principally Romario's and it stems from the privileges he enjoyed. Romario, a man with a Woosterish, Grimesian or even Diegonian affinity for landing in the soup, replies: "Zico is a clown, a lesser person who has to insult me in order to get noticed." The Gucci handbags are flying down in Rio.

Running sore

It has been the custom in the past for winners of the New York Marathon to get invited back, and to get paid a nice appearance fee for doing so. That has not happened with Salvador Garcia, who won in 1991. No fee, no invite and faxes he sent to the organisers were not answered.

The race director, Allan Steinfield, said: "Not everyone is invited. He just didn't fit in." In the end, Garcia just turned up and raced, finishing in tenth place. He did so wearing a singlet bearing a red star and crossed rifles, which, he says, is the symbol of his own political party, "The Democratic Revolutionary Movement for the Honour of Mexican Sport".

THE OLD SMITHY AT BATCHWORTH

MANY THINGS HAVE GONE FOR A BURTON THESE DAYS - BUT THANKFULLY NOT IN BURTON. MARSTON'S PEDIGREE REMAINS THE GOLDEN PINT IT WAS IN 'GOOD OLD JOEY MARSTON'S DAYS, BECAUSE IT'S THE ONLY BEER STILL BREWED IN WOODEN CASKS.

TO FIND NEAREST WHOLESALE DEPOT, WHAT THE USED TO BE

MARSTON'S Pedigree

Broncos feeling at home with life on road

By Christopher Irvine

AN A-Z map of the capital, rather than scarf or replica jersey, has become the essential accessory for London Broncos rugby league supporters. T is for Twickenham, B for Brentford next week and C for Charlton from December.

It is confusing enough that "home" today is the Stoop Memorial Ground, home of Harlequins rugby union club, during the Broncos' brief stay in Twickenham's shadow. Live BBC television coverage of their Regal Trophy third-round tie with Halifax will put the Broncos on the map. Where is trickier.

The Stoop is the London club's ninth "home" ground in the 15 years since their halcyon early days as Fulham. Brentford is yet another staging post — Wigan visit tomorrow week — before a one-year move to The Valley with Charlton Athletic.

Although a 25-mile trek from their nominal base at Barnet Copthall, the facilities at Charlton, plus the football club's enthusiastic welcome, offers the opportunity Barry Maranta, the Broncos chairman, has been seeking since relinquishing his quarter-share of Brisbane Broncos and investing in London.

"It's a matter of converting people," he said. "With good seating, good food and so on, we can bring in families. When we present the sport the way we play it, we'll attract the numbers."

Since becoming victims



Bentley: Halifax return

of the Broncos' expansive game in the championship match at the Stoop ten days ago, Halifax have back their international trio, Bentley, Harrison and Moriarty. Craig Dean, 19, is a gamble at stand-off against Dynevor and Walker, the accomplished London half backs.

Bradford are rebuilding and Leeds recuperating from their defeat by Sheffield, which gives a keen edge to their derby tie at Headingley tomorrow, in which Craig Robinson, a Dudley Hill amateur, gets a surprise debut as the Bulls struggle to replace Denny Fox at scrum half.

St Helens are an awkward hurdle at Hull. Wigan, the holders, also face first division opposition at Huddersfield, who will have Darryl Van de Velde, the former Castleford coach, in charge from December 5.

□ Hopes of ending the feud in Australia have risen with the agreement by Kerry Packer, the Australian Rugby League's main backer, to screen Super League matches on his Channel 9 network.

All-English tournament has place in calendar

By David Hands, Rugby Correspondent

THE vexed question of whether club or district should be the proving ground for international rugby can be set aside for a week or two, in England and Ireland anyway. The competitive club programme in both countries is in abeyance, leaving the established provincial series in Ireland and the English divisional championship in England to take centre stage.

The Irish, at least, seem content with that structure. Their provinces are in Europe but resume their own inter-province struggle today, in Belfast (Ulster v Munster) and at Sunbury, where the Irish Exiles meet Connacht. The Exiles include Paul Flood, a former England Under-21 player, at centre and link Christian Saverimuttu, Ireland's newest scrum half, with Niall Malone, of Leicester, at half back.

Murray Kidd, the Ireland coach, and Donal Lenihan, the manager of the A team, are due to watch the Exiles, whose ranks may be swelled next season if the informal discussions taking place between Saracens and Eddie Huijve, the international flanker from Shannon, bear fruit.

If the Rugby Football Union's report on the future of the game is accepted, then the CIS divisional championship in England is on its last legs. In the wake of the disappointing international performance last weekend, however, it would appear to have a marked relevance this season both so far as the divisional XV's to play Western Samoa are concerned and with regard to the England senior and A teams against the same opponents.

London, who play the North at Wakefield today, open against the touring side on Wednesday at Twickenham — for a change a comparatively empty, echoing Twickenham. Ticket sales have been meagre, swelled only by the union's youth development officers offering free seats to parties of youngsters, as the North have done so successfully in the past.

In contrast, tickets at the provincial venues have sold well — for example, the first game of rugby union in the new Sir Alfred McAlpine Stadium in Huddersfield on December 5 is expected to attract around 15,000; but then the

North, who beat a lacklustre South West 38-15 last week, have always invested heavily in the divisional championship.

Fran Cotton, the former England prop who is their chairman of selectors, makes the valid point that divisional rugby is for Englishmen only. "Club sides are increasingly multinational, which denies some would-be England players the chance to prove themselves," he said. "Divisional sides allow the best players in the best clubs to form a side which has that important element of not being cosy and familiar."

Cotton believes that area rugby remains the way forward and that divisional sides should be playing provincial visitors.

At an individual level, the progress of Austin Healey, the Orrell scrum half, will be closely monitored. He was initially picked in the North's squad as a wing (his position last season), but Mike Siemen, the England selector, insisted that Healey should be considered at scrum half and his voice has been heard.

The Samoans, having disposed of the Dark Blues in midweek, take on the Light Blues at Cambridge with a side that includes eight of those who drew 15-15 with Scotland a week ago. They beat the university 33-13 six years ago and, having watched Tulea Falauso score four tries against Oxford, Brian Lima will be keen to show his paces in success by a similar margin.

Cardiff, returning from probably the best match of the Heineken Cup so far, against Bègles-Bordeaux, seek to retain their place at the head of the Heineken League by beating Newport. They lead by five points from Pontypridd, but Pontypridd have a game in hand and should comfortably beat Treorchy.

For the misty-eyed generation whose memories go back 50 years, a tour that begins tomorrow will stir the imagination — 14 survivors of the New Zealand Army side of 1945-46. Charlie Saxton's Kiwis, will accompany a New Zealand Army party on a golden-anniversary tour. The first of six matches is against the Public School Wanderers at Old Deer Park.

All Blacks juggernaut becomes a transport of delight

GERALD DAVIES

Rugby Commentary



crowded; tactics are consequently restricted. The plan is to create and recreate immovable mauls, to recycle the ball until at some stage it is hoped a gap might appear.

This kind of rugby is not only predictable but is played with blinkers. Recently, Jonathan Davies played stand-off half for Cardiff against Cambridge University. He had, as should be expected in only his second game since his return from rugby league, a modest match. There was criticism, however, that he played rugby relevant to six or seven years ago. It appears that he is so out

of touch that he naïvely passed the ball, heaven forbid, to his threequarters from first-phase possession. This, by all accounts, is not the done thing.

Scrum and lineouts are opportunities for mauls or rucks to be set up, followed by more of the same. Those who profess such a philosophy need only to have looked at the highlights of France versus New Zealand to discover what boloney they speak. Three of the All Blacks' tries came directly from the lineout.

France's last try — and indeed their first, with a couple of slight adjustments by Benazzi — were initiated from scrums. There was no need for several bludgeoning attempts at physical confrontation.

Timing, angles of running and speed were the vitalising components. What is more, rugby in the northern hemisphere countries is geared to those phases — rucking and mauling — in which they are not particularly good.

Critically, the ball is returned too slowly. The key is to catch the opposition on the hop. Justin Marshall did not have to go digging beneath a heap of bodies to retrieve the ball in the way that scrum halves from other countries do. As always with New Zealand, the ball was presented to him as he is meant to have it, on a plate and quickly.

All possibilities are open after that, as the All Blacks

showed in what was a comprehensive display at Parc des Princes. But there is a problem. Laurie Mains, in his concluding comments as the All Blacks coach, said: "We want a fast game but we have yet to fathom what the required levels of fitness are to play it for the full 80-minute duration."

Asking the referee how long there was still to go, Sean Fitzpatrick, the All Black captain, was told: "Twenty-five minutes." He could hardly believe it. His team had to dig deep into their reserves after that, he said.

It did not show — they were a joy to watch. And with the festive season nearly upon us, a Christmas gift suggestion? The month of August in South Africa, please. Why? A four-match series between the Springboks and the All Blacks will be on.



Andrew, who makes his first appearance for Newcastle today, during training at the club's Kingston Park ground

Newcastle discover the new world

Rob Andrew looks forward to returning as a player on a modest rugby stage

Under normal circumstances I don't suppose a friendly fixture between Newcastle and Harrogate would attract quite so much attention as my new club's game today appears to be doing. But we are all living in a new world and I have to accept that my first appearance in Newcastle colours, alongside Nick Poppellwell, Dean Ryan and Graham Childs, will create something of a stir.

Although the past two months have been almost frightening in the pace of change, it has also been frustrating personally. While I admit that I would have been in no shape to play for England against South Africa last week, such has been the disruption to my training schedule, as a player, I still have something to offer.

There was a similar situation in 1992, when I returned from Toulouse to rejoin Wasps and found myself obliged to spend six weeks regaining fitness. While I don't mind watching, I would far rather be out on the field; it

will be different when age or injury removes me from the game but today comes as a welcome diversion.

Everyone connected with Newcastle has lived through a dramatic change but that had to happen if fortunes were to be revived. During the summer players were leaving the club, even though they had had a moderately successful season in the second division, but now people are coming to terms with life after Sir John Hall's arrival.

If the players have any ambitions they know they have a chance to fulfil them; some may realise their days are numbered but that increasingly will be the case at all clubs. Players who can survive in the second division may not necessarily do so in the first division, which is where we all hope Newcastle will be within a couple of years.

I have seen a gradual

improvement in form over the past month as players have buckled down to the job of stemming the tide down the table. In that period we have played the four strongest clubs in the division, Northampton, London Scottish, London Irish and Moseley. Now we have the chance to blend in the newcomers, three of them internationals, with the other squad members who will get a far more realistic idea of where the club is going.

Some may suggest that our game with Transvaal on Tuesday represents far too high a step to negotiate. But this will bring home to everyone where we want Newcastle to be. I hope that Gary Armstrong and Dodi Weir, the two Scotland internationals, will be available and that it will offer players and supporters a taste of the "big time".

The time and effort being spent on Newcastle is not so that the club can be mediocre. We need a culture that is both successful and enjoyable, and I hope some of that comes out against Harrogate today. I'm a great believer in winning, that's why we play the game. I don't believe we should accept a few defeats on the way to improvement.

We will visit Wasps in three weeks' time in that frame of mind. Not that any of the new recruits, all of whom used to play at Sudbury, will appear in that game, which must be used as a dress rehearsal for the Pilkington Cup match against Moseley a week later.

Rob Andrew's last club game for Wasps was against Gloucester on October 14. The next week he retired from international rugby.

Confident Collins can put Carr in place

STEVE COLLINS, the World Boxing Organisation (WBO) super-middleweight champion, has to look to contests ahead of him against Nigel Benn and Roy Jones (Srikumar Sen writes). So he is not likely to let a lowly challenger like Cornelius Carr spoil his plans tonight at the Point, Dublin.

Unless Collins has taken the bout lightly Carr should not pose a threat. Although, at 26, Carr is five years younger than the champion. He has so far shown not the kind of flair that makes a future champion stand out from rank and file contenders.

The bout should not be more than a marking time affair for Collins as he waits for Benn to come through his mandatory defence against Thulane Malinga, of South Africa.

Ryan endures

Squash: Derek Ryan, of Ireland, ended the winning run of Mark Chaloner, of England, at the Pakistan Open in Karachi yesterday. Chaloner, a member of the England team that won the world championship in Cairo last weekend, lost out to Ryan in an energy-sapping five-game quarter-final. The Irishman fought back from two games down to win 14-17, 12-15, 15-18, 15-3, 15-12 and will play Jansher Khan, the world No 1, in the semi-finals.

True aim

American football: Troy Aikman threw for 192 yards and two touchdowns as the Dallas Cowboys secured a 24-12 Thanksgiving Day win over the Kansas City Chiefs. Scott Mitchell passed for a team-record 410 yards and four touchdowns, two of them to Brett Perriman, as the Detroit Lions beat the Minnesota Vikings 44-38 for their third successive win.

Henman halted

Tennis: Tim Henman's winning run came to an end yesterday when he was beaten 7-6, 4-6, 6-3 by Jordi Burillo, of Spain, in the quarter-finals of the ATP Challenger event in Andorra. Henman, 21, was far from disgraced against a player ranked No 52 in the world — 47 places above the Englishman.

Blown away

Yachting: Gale force winds and rough seas forced organisers to abandon the third day of the world match-racing championships in Auckland yesterday. Rod Davis and Bertrand Pace, the defending champion, have already qualified for the semi-finals.

Return visit

Rowing: Matthias Szejewski, the German world indoor champion, heads a record entry of more than 600 competitors for the 1995 British indoor championships in Reading tomorrow. Szejewski, 36, 10m and 17 stone, last appeared in, and won, the championships in 1992.

Clarke's aim

Cycling: Barrie Clarke, Britain's cyclo-cross and mountain bike champion, returns to competition tomorrow after a two-week lay-off in the Open London championship's cross event at Addington Hills. He is determined to reverse his defeat last year by Roger Hammond and Steve Douce.

Basketball loses its new year festival

LACK of sponsorship and television interest has forced one of the world's oldest basketball tournaments to close down (Nicholas Harling writes). For the first time in 19 years, the world invitation club championships (WIBC) will not be taking place at Crystal Palace over the new year holiday.

David Last, the tournament's director since its inauguration, had lined up four foreign clubs and four Budweiser League teams for this year's event, but reluctantly he has had to tell them to look elsewhere for competition over the festive period.

Last was unavailable for comment yesterday but it is believed that he has not given up on the tournament altogether. "I think he will make the utmost effort to get it on again next year," Mark DeAth, the event's manager at the National Sports Centre,

said. "I don't think he wants to drop it entirely."

Billed as merely "a televised international tournament", the WIBC started out in 1977 with eight men's senior teams. The sponsorship of Philips Electronics brought much-needed prestige over the next few years, during which the event's profile was improved by the participation of such illustrious foreign clubs as Maccabi Tel Aviv, victorious six times in nine years.

Women's junior and wheelchair competitions were all added to the WIBC programme and Last struggled on between the end of Philips' involvement and the beginning of a four-year association with Russell Athletic, the kit manufacturer. Without television or a sponsor last year, he still somehow put on a promotion but it had become a shadow of its former, far grander self.

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NFL): Detroit 44 Minnesota 38.

BADMINTON

GLASGOW: Scottish Open: Women: Singles: Second round: M Pedersen (Den) 2-1 Hargreaves (Eng) 12-8, 10-12, 11-7; D Pheasant (Can) 2-1 K Eriksen (Den) 7-11, 12-10, 12-8; H Pheasant (Can) 2-1 S Llewellyn (Wales) 11-4, 12-8.

BASKETBALL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): Houston 115 Indiana 108; Orlando Magic 90 New York Knicks 88; Los Angeles Lakers 101 Utah Jazz 95; Chicago Bulls 95 Milwaukee Bucks 88; Boston Celtics 95 Philadelphia 76ers 88; New Jersey Nets 88 Washington Wizards 88; Miami Heat 88 Cleveland Cavaliers 88; Detroit Pistons 88 Indiana Pacers 88; Charlotte Hornets 88 Atlanta Hawks 88; New Orleans Hornets 88 Memphis Grizzlies 88; San Antonio Spurs 88 Dallas Mavericks 88; Houston Rockets 88 Phoenix Suns 88; Portland Trail Blazers 88 Sacramento Kings 88; Golden State Warriors 88 Los Angeles Clippers 88; New York Knicks 88 Philadelphia 76ers 88; Boston Celtics 95 Philadelphia 76ers 88; New Jersey Nets 88 Washington Wizards 88; Miami Heat 88 Cleveland Cavaliers 88; Detroit Pistons 88 Indiana Pacers 88; Charlotte Hornets 88 Atlanta Hawks 88; New Orleans Hornets 88 Memphis Grizzlies 88; San Antonio Spurs 88 Dallas Mavericks 88; Houston Rockets 88 Phoenix Suns 88; Portland Trail Blazers 88 Sacramento Kings 88; Golden State Warriors 88 Los Angeles Clippers 88; 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RACING 44-45

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SPOIL ONE MAN'S
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SPORT

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 25 1995

RUGBY UNION 47

ROB ANDREW ON
HIS FIRST GAME
IN NEWCASTLE COLOURS

Illingworth's support cannot disguise fast bowler's likely fate

Malcolm facing Test exile

FROM ALAN LEE
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT
IN BLOEMFONTEIN

BLOEMFONTEIN (second day of three): England, with nine second-innings wickets standing, are 192 runs ahead of Free State

ON HIS ritual visit to the press box, Raymond Illingworth grimaced expressively. "I'm not learning much on this pitch," he muttered. And yet the day was not without its valuable deposits in the England manager's bank of wisdom.

He learnt, if he did not already know, that the battle to give his fastest bowler a significant role in this Test series is now close to being lost. And he learnt that his best batting side is almost certainly not the one that will play in the second Test next week.

Devon Malcolm may protest with good cause that the pitches thus far in South

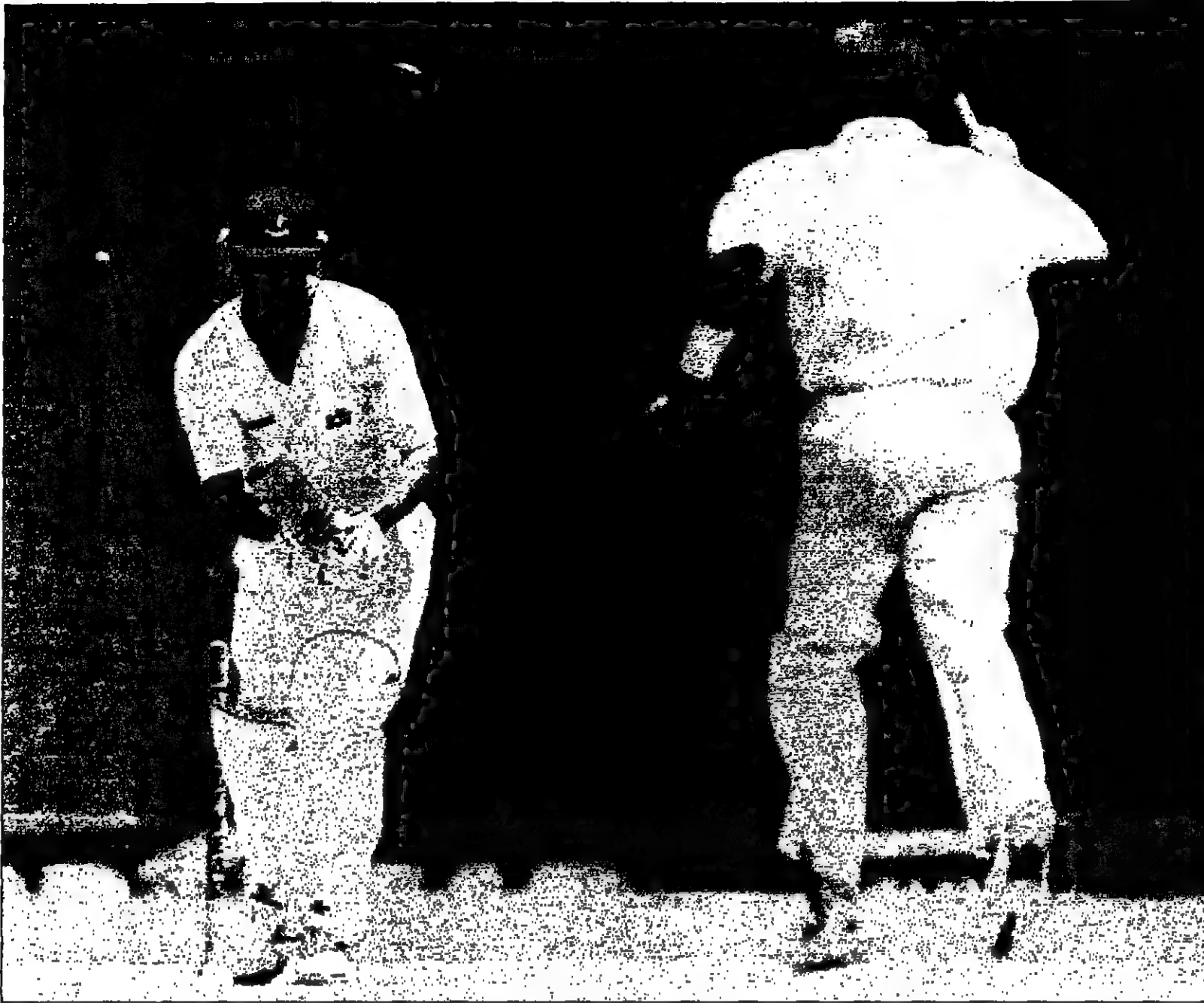
Salim Malik portrait 46
Smith's last chance 46

Africa have given him no assistance. Without exception, they have been discouragingly slow. But the best fast bowlers command respect on all surfaces and Malcolm, beset by technical and temperamental flaws he shows no sign of resolving, is fast squandering the reservoir of South African respect with which he began this tour.

It is not unusual for Malcolm to concede four runs an over, as he did yesterday. This can be accommodated so long as he offers hostility as a counterpoint to charity. But while he bowls as he is now, his lumbering approach giving way to a square-on delivery, arms and feet splayed, and an apologetic follow-through that darts daintily away towards cover, the batsmen's fear-factor so important to his game does not exist.

Illingworth, having evidently given up trying to goad him, did his best to excuse and encourage his strike bowler. "It is a very, very slow pitch and it's hard to judge him on this. I think his general body language has been better in this game. I think he has tried." It was faint praise, and he knew it. Malcolm is bowling as if he no longer means it: no rhythm, no pace, no point. Unless he undergoes a transplant of aggression and adrenalin early today there is no reason to consider him for the Johannesburg Test.

Conversely, there are numerous reasons to consider John Crawley. His unbeaten



Dominic Cork, the England all-rounder, spectacularly uproots the off stump of Hansie Cronje, the Free State captain. Photograph: Derek Cox

half-century amid the shadows of a glorious evening was just one more endorsement of his rich form. The problem for Crawley is that there is no short-cut into the team. His natural place is at No 3 and soon it may be his, to make of what he will. For now, however, it would barely be conceivable to abandon Mark Ramprakash with only one game behind him and Illingworth confirmed that this will not be done.

These were the central issues yesterday but much the most compelling phase of the day was the post-lunch session, in which Dominic Cork bowled England into a commanding position and Free State fought back through a precocious debutant, Hendrik Dippenaar.

Cork is my idea of En-

gland's likeliest match-winner in the Test series and his first competitive bowl for almost three weeks did nothing to dissuade that view. He ran in with the purpose and poise that Malcolm found so elu-

sive, bowled close to the stumps and darted the ball about at a brisk pace. He plucked out the off stump of Hansie Cronje, the South Africa captain, with a ball that straightened off a good line

then cut one into the left-handed Kossie Venter to win a leg-before short.

He might have had another, two overs later, but Dippenaar was reprieved, to the great relief of several dozen of his schoolmates. Released from studies at the nearby Grey College they were seated in red and black tracksuits on the grass bank, a banner bearing their friend's nickname, "Boots", draped in front of them. By testime they had seen him score 46 in the style of a coming talent, and they rushed across the ground to shake his hand, one by one.

Dippenaar, 18, headed the South African Under-19 averages on their tour of England last summer, making 133 at Headingley in the final Test. Breaking from his final examinations for his opening in first-class cricket he batted with

rare panache, a hook for six off Malcolm being the best of many pedigree strokes.

In the morning, Free State had proceeded sedately, Deon Jordaan profiting from a stumping miss by Stewart on his way to 52 and Cronje playing some dismissive cover drives. Malcolm's only wicket was a dubious one, Jordaan plainly believing he had hit the ground with his bat when adjudged caught behind but, for this bowler, all donations were welcome.

Cork and Mark Litt altered the tone of the game after lunch and, with Richard Illingworth picking up three late wickets, it was not until the final hour, when Atherton had gone to an ugly pull and Ramprakash joined Crawley in a stand threatened only by risky running, that the bat dominated again.

A STRONG hint that National Lottery money might be made available to sport for revenue funding rather than restricted, as at present, to capital projects was given yesterday by David Carpenter, the head of the Sports Council's National Lottery unit (David Powell writes).

Until now, lottery grants have been limited to applications for the building and improvement of facilities. However, in recent months, there has been a strong voice from within the governing bodies of sport, and from international competitors, to widen the scope to include athlete preparations. The British Olympic Association, the British Athletic Federation and the Top 100 Club, comprising leading British sportsmen and women past and present, are among those who have called for a change in the lottery's constitution.

Carpenter, speaking at the annual conference of the Central Council of Physical Recreation, said that he sensed that a change was imminent. "The door has been firmly shut within Government, but we are starting to see it open," he said.

From the middle of next year, Carpenter suggested, sport might receive grants for coaching, sports science and sports medicine. He added that money could become available to national federations endeavouring to put on world championship events in Great Britain.

The need for money to support world events in Britain was underlined by Liz Nicholl, the chief executive of the All England Netball Association, who told the conference that her governing body had lost £120,000 in staging the world championships in Birmingham this year.

Batty thwarts swift solution to brawl row

BY PETER BALL

BLACKBURN Rovers suffered yet another blow yesterday when their attempt to deal promptly with Graeme Le Saux and David Batty for their

touchline brawl in Moscow during the match against Spartak on Wednesday was brought to an abrupt halt when Batty decided to consult his adviser.

The club had intended to announce that they had fined the pair, but Batty is taking the weekend to decide whether to accept the punishment and the club will not now make a statement until Monday at the earliest. Whatever the final outcome, Batty's decision has prevented any swift, clean solution.

The aftermath will linger on, leaving both the club Ray Harford, and the manager, at the crossroads of their season. "It has not been an easy 48 hours," Harford said with evident feeling yesterday after meeting Robert Coar, the club chairman, for the second time in 24 hours. Although suspending the players or putting them on the transfer list were options, the verdict was a fine.

Even with the subsequent complication, dealing with the offence may be the easy bit for the manager. "The problem we have now is where we are going, what we are going to do about this situation and the future," a subdued Harford said.

Five months after fulfilling his ambition and returning to management at the peak of the English game, Harford is left considering the fall-out from the fight at a club that has plunged to the depths, with a team now divided among themselves after the euphoria of winning the FA Carling Premiership last season.

"Rediscovering team spirit is the hardest job," Harford said. "The first job is to get some unity. Team spirit has always been terrific here, that's why we won the league, but the job now is to get them all together to play for the club."

To do that, Harford is facing the hardest task of his managerial career. The English champions, already at a low ebb with an appalling away record for a club of their strength, are contemplating a perilous short-term future



Harford: subdued

wound inflicted on Wednesday is the question. "It wasn't one blow too many, but there's only two ways you can go after that," he said. "You either crack completely or you get stronger."

Yesterday, as he wrestled with the situation, it was impossible not to sympathise with Harford. Nothing in his spells at Wimbledon or Luton Town, or his four years as coach at Blackburn during the club's rise to the top of the English game, had prepared him for the present difficulties. How he copes will determine not only Blackburn's future, but also his own.

Prospect of wider funding by lottery

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TCCB rule changes would close door on Symonds

FROM ALAN LEE

ANDREW SYMONDS, the gifted young batsman who spurned selection for the England A tour to Pakistan, could be outlawed from county cricket if proposed new legislation on the hot potato of dual nationality is adopted by the Test and County Cricket Board (TCCB) next month.

The TCCB's registrations committee is planning to alter the procedure under which Symonds, who was born in Birmingham but brought up in Australia, controversially pledged his availability for England last year in order to play for Gloucestershire.

If the changes are passed, at a meeting scheduled for December 7, Symonds would no longer be able to

shelter behind the ambiguity of his situation.

Until now the declaration document has stated merely an intention to be available for England. It has also involved only those cricketers in the process of qualifying for this country, so technically, by birthright, Symonds was not even required to sign it. It is intended that the new declarations should be signed by every county cricketer in the country and they will contain a subtle change of wording.

I understand the negative will now be emphasised, the cricketer having to declare that he has "no desire or intention to play cricket in any country outside the European Union" and that he will not seek to qualify for any such country. The Australian allegiances of

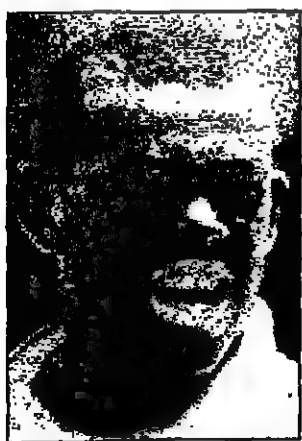
Symonds would debar him under this arrangement, just as it would have prevented Roger Twose playing for Warwickshire last season while qualifying to represent New Zealand. In future, such players could only play county cricket as overseas players.

This toughening of the registration rules will win approval from the Cricketers Association, which voiced deep concern over Symonds's situation at its annual meeting in September. David Graveney, the general secretary, confirmed yesterday: "There is a strength of feeling among my members which has not dissipated. They are against the principle of players exploiting our system."

Symonds, who received the relative pittance of £7,000 for a season with

Gloucestershire in which he achieved a first-class average of 56 — breaking the world record for sixes, in an innings and a match, along the way — has a vastly improved contract offer from the club, but has not yet signed. Despite the widespread scepticism over his moral right to play as an Englishman, several other counties, Surrey among them, are watching the situation.

The dilemma that new legislation would cause him may be averted. Although he has yet to establish a place in Queensland's Sheffield Shield side, influential voices in Australia are promoting his inclusion in the country's World Cup squad, which would automatically terminate his right to dual qualification.



Symonds: facing exile

ALFRED DUNHILL



THE LONDINIUM.

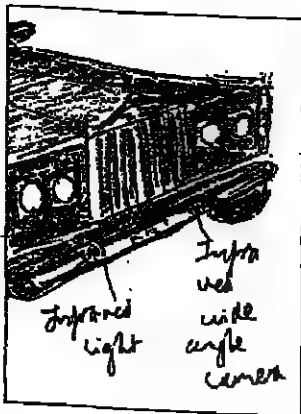
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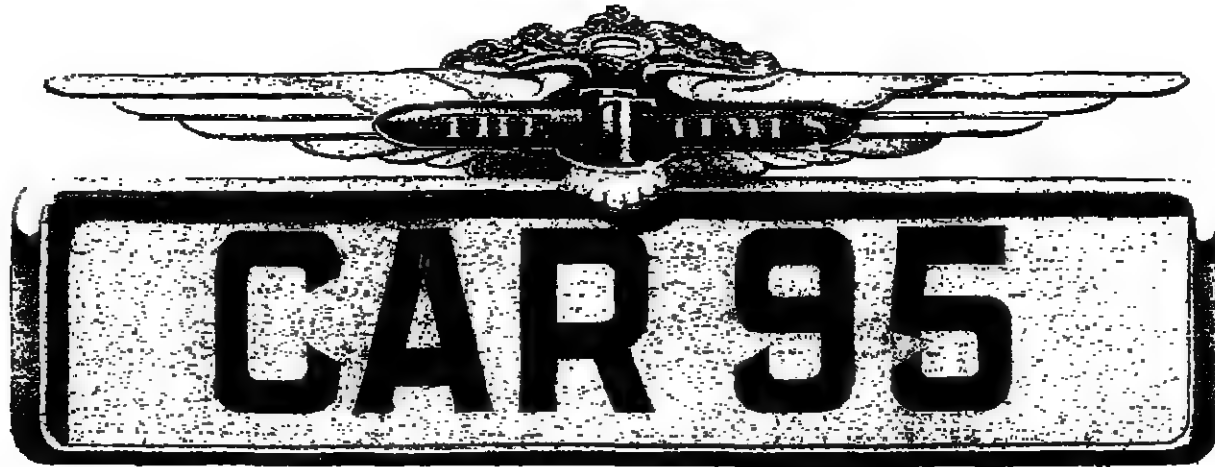
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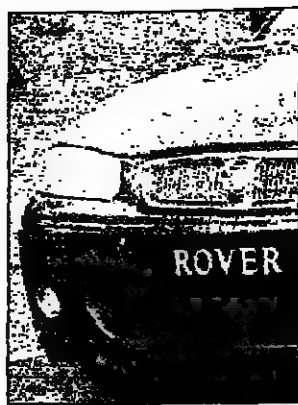
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SATURDAY NOVEMBER 25 1995

Cowboy companies that offer to buy cars in instalments are costing owners thousands. Tony Dawe reports

The racket that never-never pays up

Beware strangers bearing gifts! An Army officer who advertised his high-performance Volkswagen VR6 was approached by a leasing company which offered him far more than he had hoped. He never saw a penny.

He lost the car completely for more than three months. Even after tracing it, he had to spend another ten months chasing it across England, employing private detectives and solicitors, before he got it back.

The officer is just one of hundreds of victims of a racket being operated by a handful of cowboy leasing companies. They entice motorists eager to sell prestige second-hand cars by offering larger-than-expected amounts, which will be paid in monthly instalments with a lump sum at the end.

Many lured by these deals have not received a single instalment or seen their car again. Those, like the officer, who have traced their vehicles have discovered that the law is so complicated that it can prove immensely difficult to get their own property back.

Detective Constable John Ryan of Greater Manchester Police's vehicle fraud and autocrime unit, which traced the VR6, advised CAR 95: "If anyone is approached and offered a deal which involves being paid in instalments for their car, they should think long and hard about it."

The unit is currently engaged in a far-reaching investigation into vehicle leasing companies, which has taken officers to most counties in England and Wales and involves at least 200 cars. Its warnings are endorsed by the Finance & Leasing Association, which fears that motorists will be put off entering into genuine leasing deals because of the activities of a few cowboy companies.

These operators feast on the classified advertisements in newspapers and motoring magazines, which is why papers such as *The Times* strive to ensure that advertisers are genuine. No publication, however, can control those who respond to the advertisements.

The Army officer, whose name we have agreed to withhold because he has served in Northern Ireland, advertised his top-of-the-range 1993 VR6 in *Carweek* in August last year. The only serious inquiry he received was from Management Leasing of Stockport, Cheshire.

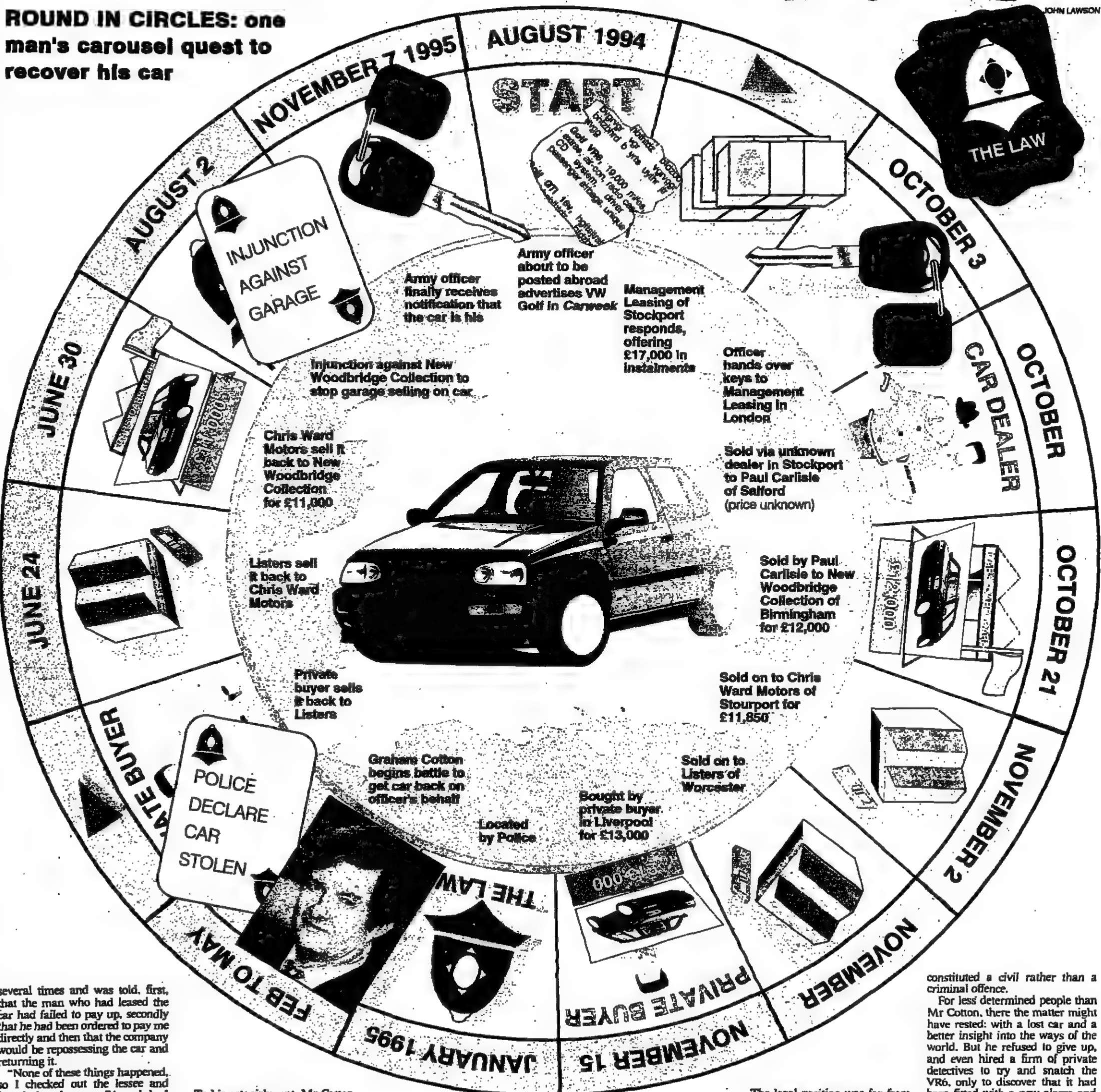
The company said it had a customer eager to lease a VR6 and offered £400 a month for a year with a final payment of £12,000, making a total of £17,000. At the officer's request, the company provided two references, both of whom said their dealings had been satisfactory.

The officer, who was about to be posted abroad, decided the offer was preferable to leaving the car in a garage, so handed over the keys to two representatives of Management Leasing in London on October 3 last year.

He also signed a contract stating that he would retain ownership of the car until the deal was completed the following year, but the lease company would be responsible for all maintenance and insurance costs. The first payment was due on November 4 last year. It did not arrive.

Unable to pursue the lease company himself, the officer enlisted Graham Cotton, his uncle and a former motor industry marketing executive, to fight his battle. Mr Cotton of Kilmington, Wiltshire, said: "I called the lease company

ROUND IN CIRCLES: one man's carousel quest to recover his car



several times and was told, first, that the man who had leased the car had failed to pay up, secondly that he had been ordered to pay me directly and then that the company would be repossessing the car and returning it.

"None of these things happened, so I checked out the lessee and found that he was 74 and had handed in his driving licence four years ago."

Further inquiries revealed that trading standards officers in Cheshire had investigated similar rackets, but had handed over the case to Greater Manchester Police. In January, one of their detectives told Mr Cotton that the car had been traced to a private motorist in Huyton, Liverpool.

To his astonishment, Mr Cotton learnt that the VR6 had been sold four times before his nephew's first payment was even due, and twice more in the next fortnight. It had moved from an unknown dealer in Stockport to a private buyer with an address on an industrial estate in Salford, Greater Manchester, to garages in Birmingham, Stourport-on-Severn and Worcester before ending up in Liverpool.

"All along the trail, reputable garages were buying and selling this vehicle without proper proof of ownership," Mr Cotton said. "They were behaving in a way most private owners would never dream of doing. This could never happen in the United States because of the requirement to hand over documents at every transaction."

Locating the car was just another stage in a long battle. Its new owner was reluctant to give up a prestige model for which he had paid £13,000, especially as the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency had registered him as its keeper after letters to the officer at his former London address had gone unanswered.

constituted a civil rather than a criminal offence.

For less determined people than Mr Cotton, there the matter might have rested: with a lost car and a better insight into the ways of the world. But he refused to give up, and even hired a firm of private detectives to try and snatch the VR6, only to discover that it had been fitted with a new alarm and immobiliser.

The legal position suddenly changed in May this year, however, when Greater Manchester detectives decided, as part of their detailed investigation, that the car had, indeed, been stolen. The Liverpoolian owner complained to the Worcester garage, part of the

Continued on page 2

Cellnet and Vodafone round up to the nearest minute or half minute,

Orange users should be charged by the second.

For one reason or another, on average, Orange users save £20 every month.



AA GRIDLOCK GUIDE

LONDON

A40 Western Avenue, Acton: Major roadworks between junctions 1 and 2 (Tewkesbury-Ledbury).
 A406 North Circular Road, Upper Edmonton: Major roadworks continue at the Lea Valley Viaduct.
 A10 Great Cambridge Road, Enfield: Major roadworks between Lee Road and Bury Street, with a contraflow.
 A240 Kingston Road, Tottenham: Roadworks between Tottenham Broadway and Jubilee Way cause regular delays around Worcester Park and the A3.
 A304 Fulham Road, Fulham: Closed westbound for roadworks at the junction with Gunter Grove.

SOUTH EAST

M4 Berkshire: Major roadworks and a contraflow between junctions 6 and 8/9 (Slough-Maidenhead) cause lengthy tailbacks daily.
 M3 Surrey: Roadworks with lane closures in both directions between junctions 1 and 2 (Surrey-M25).
 A12 Essex: Roadworks and a contraflow on the Stanway Bypass, near Colchester, with just 1 lane open in each direction now.
 A5 Buckinghamshire: Roadworks and lane closures at Milton Keynes, between the Abbey Hill junction and the Kelly's Kitchen roundabout.
 A340 Hampshire: Roadworks at the Town Centre West roundabout, Basingstoke.

SOUTH WEST

M5 Gloucestershire: Roadworks and a contraflow between junctions 11 and 12 (Cheltenham-Gloucester).
 M5 Somerset: Bridge repairs with lane closures both ways between junctions 21 and 22 (Weston-super-Mare - Burnham-on-Sea).
 M5 Somerset: Roadworks with lane closures either side of junction 23 (Glastonbury).
 A30 Dorset: KT Hill in Sherborne is closed for resurfacing work.

MIDLANDS AND EAST ANGLIA

M6 West Midlands: Roadworks and a contraflow between junctions 5 and 6.

M50 Hereford & Worcester

Roadworks and lane closures between junctions 1 and 2 (Tewkesbury-Ledbury).
 M6 Staffordshire: 1 lane closed northbound for roadworks near junction 14 (A34).
 M1 Leicestershire: Roadworks and a contraflow between junctions 21 and 22 (Leicester).
 A47 Norfolk: 2 sets of major roadworks, at Terrington St John (between Wisbech and King's Lynn) and at Swaffham.

NORTH

M1 West Yorkshire: Roadworks and a contraflow at the end of the motorway at junction 47.
 M6 Greater Manchester: Roadworks and lane closures between junctions 24 and 26 (Ashton-Orrell).
 A595 Cumbria: Resurfacing work at Wigan with restrictions near the Red Dial junction.
 Merseyside: Major roadworks on Derby Road, Liverpool between Blackstone Street and Bankhall Street.
 A56 Lancashire: The Haslingden Bypass is closed southbound for roadworks at the Bant Road roundabout every weekend until Christmas, 8pm Friday to 8am Monday.

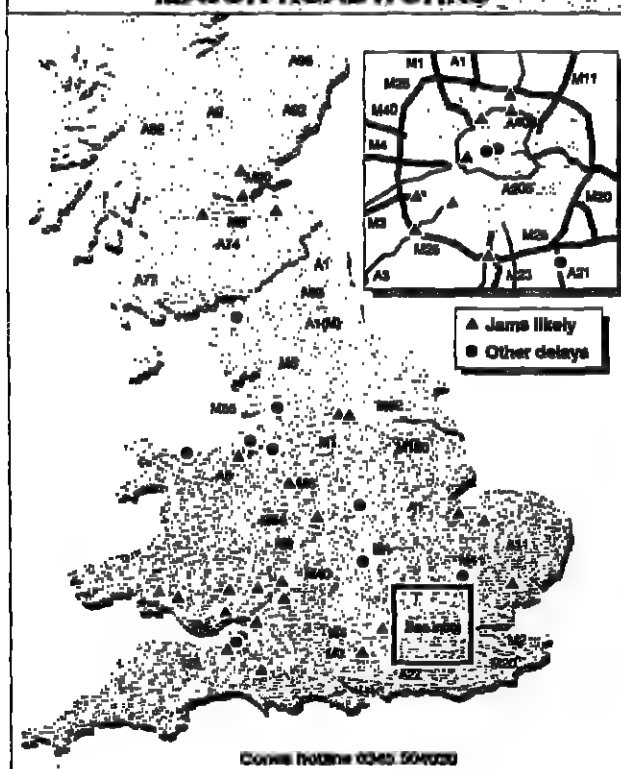
WALES

A449/A40 Gwent: Roadworks continue between Newport and Monmouth, with much of the route reduced to a single lane.
 A465 West Glamorgan: Roadworks and a contraflow at the Clydach interchange.
 A48 West Glamorgan: Construction work with lane closures at the Wychtree Roundabout at Monistion.
 A547 Gwynedd: Bridge repairs with temporary traffic lights near the A55 junction at Llandudno Junction.
 A548 Clwyd: Roadworks and a contraflow between Oakenholt and Kelsterton.

SCOTLAND

A749 Strathclyde: Deilmann Bridge in Glasgow is closed southbound for roadworks.
 A768 Lothian: Lasswade Bridge in Edinburgh is closed for repairs.
 M90 Fife: Roadworks and a contraflow between junctions 1 and 2 (Admiralty-Masteron).
 NORTHERN IRELAND
 County Tyrone: Roadworks on the Omagh Bypass at the junction with Derry Road.

MAJOR ROADWORKS



Continued from Page 1

Lister group, which agreed to repurchase the vehicle.

Faced with angry calls from Mr Cotton and his solicitor, Lister's managers sold the car back to the previous owner, Chris Ward Motors of Stourport-on-Severn, which, under continued pressure from Mr Cotton persuaded the New Woodbridge Collection of Birmingham to repurchase it. There the VR6 finally came to rest at the end of June, after ten moves in nine months. In August, Mr Cotton obtained a court injunction to prevent the car being sold, but the company announced its intention to fight the subsequent court case. It even won the backing of the Retail Motor Industry Federation, which insists that the garage had bought the car in good faith and there was no proof that it had, at any point, been stolen.

On the eve of the hearing this Autumn, the New Woodbridge Collection changed its mind and agreed to return the car. Earlier this month, the Army officer finally collected the VR6 and received formal notification from the court and the company that he is the rightful owner.

"It has taken ten months to

get the car back and for much of that time we have been negotiating with reputable dealers who had the support of their own association in deciding to hold on to the car," Mr Cotton said. "The police have been brilliant, patient and helpful."

"For months, I was going round one corner and running straight into a brick wall. But I refused to give up because the whole business made me so angry."

Neil Marshall, policy director of the industry federation, said that the "super-fast" movement of cars such as the VR6 defied existing checks and he supported proposals for dealers to register all transactions which would provide "greater transparency" for the consumer.

"We want the rogues out," he said. "Our members are going about their business trying to turn an honest penny, doing more and more for the customer for less and less. But there are always people on the margins."

Management Leasing has moved from its last known address, but detectives warn that the people behind the company may well be running the same racket under a different name.

First you're in the wrong queue, then the girl on the till goes for lunch. After that comes the motorway teapot...

As served in disaster areas

According to research commissioned by Hyundai, only 43 per cent of drivers claim to like travelling on motorways. Admittedly, this is a handy conclusion considering that Hyundai, jointly with the RAC, has just published a route guide which avoids motorways and traffic jams.

I think I know why a lot of drivers are jaundiced about motorways: they are allowing their opinions to be coloured by their experience of service areas. What is it about these places? They are fast catching up with British Rail and the BBC as institutions we love to hate. The reason has to do with certain scenarios, repeated *ad infinitum*. Here are some:

The food queue. This always includes four youths in motorcycle leathers who only want drinks but do not want any of the drinks on display, thus launching a redundant argument with the staff.

It also includes a couple who have not decided what they want until they are standing in front of the hot food area, which always contains

DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION



Peter Barnard

three items covered by pie crust, none of which is labelled. A quiz starts: What's that? Has it got onion in it? And so forth.

The hot drinks section. This is cunningly designed. Some of them have cups and saucers where you get the drinks, in others the crockery is half a mile away across the floor. This ensures people always have to ask, thus causing more delays.

The check-out. Motorway service areas always have two check-outs, of



which one is usually closed. They get busy at lunchtime, so one of the girls goes to lunch. The other immutable law is that you are standing at the one which will close after the customer in front of you has paid.

Once seated at a table, we can start to philosophise about the greatest mystery of all: the motorway teapot. This device is impossible for ordinary people to buy, since no retailer would have the gall to stock it. The motorway teapot is made by Motor-

way Teapot plc, probably in China (the one I examined this week, having first donned heat-resistant gloves, gave no country of origin).

At first sight the motorway teapot looks as if its contents would hardly fill a cup. What a terrible injustice! There is enough tea in there to fill a cup, a saucer and an entire table.

Despite the fantastic buying muscle of the service area operators, they are all too shy to ring up Mr Rin Tin Tin in Shanghai and tell him they

want a teapot that pours or they will go elsewhere. I listened in vain this week for news that the reason Granada had bid for Forte was because the latter had better teapots.

My own view is that the operators are missing a golden opportunity. On boats there is a thing called a fiddle around the edge of tables, cookers etc to stop things sliding off. Kids love boats, so why not put an inch-deep fiddle around service area tables so that fractious kids can sail their model boats on a tea lake?

ONE OF the more dismal characteristics of the main motoring organisations is that they seem to agree rather a lot, so how good to see that the AA greeted the idea of 10mph limits in residential streets enthusiastically, while the RAC produced a "yes but..." response.

I am with the RAC. I will support anything that reduces the numbers of children being knocked down by cars, provided there is also a campaign aimed at parents who send their children into the street without a thought to their safety. It takes two to make a tragedy.

CHRISTMAS drink-driving myth of the week: I'm all right, I ate a big meal before drinking. Absolute tosh. All the meal does is reduce the rate at which the alcohol enters the bloodstream. Driving ability is just as impaired on a full stomach.

Victory in Britain's RAC Rally is only the beginning of a profitable road, reports Oliver Holt

Now can McRae be driven?

Muddled cars of the stragglers were still struggling back to the finish of the Network Q RAC Rally in Chester when David Richards, the Subaru team director, began mapping out the future of Colin McRae. He predicted McRae could beat Juha Kankkunen's record of five world title wins and, in rallying, superstars don't come any bigger.

McRae became Britain's first world rally champion when he swept aside the challenge of his Subaru teammate, Carlos Sainz, over the 1,446 miles and 28 stages of his home rally last week. He was quickest on 17 stages and overcame the loss of more than two minutes through a puncture early in the contest to beat the Spaniard.

The manner of his victory, and the evidence of the preceding months when he finally conquered his distrust of tarmac surfaces to finish runner-up in the Catalonian Rally, suggested that indeed this might be the start of a brilliant career. Sitting in the warmth of the rally headquarters, McRae agreed. "This is just the beginning," he said.

He discounted some of the wilder, populist rumours that he might now be ready to try his hand at Formula One. He would like to organise a run-off with a grand prix driver, a two-heat race where each drives a rally car and a Formula One car against the other to see who comes out on top. But that would be as far as it went.

His ambitions, instead, lie in cementing this success over a winter of testing and then by winning the world championship next year. He has won only five world championship rallies in his career and his hunger to add to his tally will be burning as strongly as ever, despite the addition of the world title, he promised.

"My goal is to be quick in all types of rallying," he said. "At the moment, Carlos is the one driver who is good on all surfaces. My only weakness was tarmac but I started to put that right in Catalonia and I want to continue where I left off next season."

"There is a lot more to come from me. This is just the



O ye'll take the fast road: Colin McRae and friend Mary Kazar celebrate his rally victory in traditional Scots style

beginning. I want to try to win the world championship again next year because defending it is even harder than winning it and I know I will still have the same level of motivation. I am still very young and comparatively new to the sport."

Richards, a man whose ideas can take the sport forward and help to make it more accessible to a still largely uncomprehending public, was looking at the wider canvas.

He was happy for his team, of course, for the 200 employees who work at his Prodrive factory in Banbury, where the Subaru operation is based, who had just been rewarded with their first Manufacturers' Championship as well as the drivers' crown. But he is also aware that McRae's success

brings significant commercial opportunities for both driver and sport, that may only be seized if McRae attempts to shed an attitude that is basically pleasant and humorous but is always verging on the truculent.

"With all the performance-related bonuses from sponsorships, Colin will be already well up into seven figures on his contract," Richards said. "If he decides to hibernate in Monaco and go up to see his mum in Lanark from time to time, he is not going to develop his earning capacity."

"Carlos earned more than \$5 million this year, but he is one of the best there is at developing relationships with sponsors. He is regarded on a par with Miguel Indurain as

Spain's best-known sportsman, and that cannot be said of Colin McRae in Britain at the moment. Still, the potential is there and it might be the case in 12 months' time.

As far as the sport goes, television has got to be the ultimate goal. Lessons have to be learnt about tailoring the sport to deadlines for the media and organisers have to realise that their customers are not the competitors but the public. In Catalonia, we had live television throughout the day. Things will quietly build here, too, and the starting point has got to be having the world champion.

Colin is only 27 and he is a natural. A lot of the other great

rally drivers, the real natural talents, have not really fulfilled their potential, but Colin is so focused and determined that I think he can. I see no reason why he cannot surpass the five titles that Juha Kankkunen has won."

McRae says he is ready to meet the commercial challenge. Whether he will embrace it remains to be seen. "There is a time for doing things like that and the time is now," he said. "But money is not that important to me. As long as I am being paid a salary in line with my position in the sport and in relation to what other drivers are getting, I would be happy with a quarter or a tenth of my salary," David Richards, you feel, will have to work on him.

Impreza takes the rough with the smooth

WATCHING Colin McRae chucking his Subaru Impreza around Welsh forest tracks with such abandon has prompted much admiration for one of the most understated medium-sized cars around. Sheila Guna writes.

ast, I still think this driver's car, built to take the rough with the smooth, deserves more attention. Earlier this year I took one, courtesy of Subaru, to France in place of my own larger Legacy estate. While my L8GL model may not have had £250,000 worth

of specialist work put in by Pro-Drive to prepare it for international rallying, the Impreza available on the forecourt is still a versatile beast. With its full-time four-wheel drive, it is also just a little bit different from anything else around — perhaps that is its attraction for one of the best-known owners, Camilla Parker Bowles.

Even without the extras, the car imparted a confidence-giving steadiness whether on the zigzag bends of Monte Carlo or ungritted roads in the French Alps.

Initially wary about swapping the comfort of my Legacy 2.2GL automatic for the smaller Impreza, the sheer fun of a car which needed to be driven soon came back.

As I was driving around the French Alps in early January, I had demanded a full set of chains. The mechanic based at

the Birmingham headquarters snorted: "If you can't get up the mountain in four-wheel drive, you're not going to do it with chains on." He was, of course, right and they remain in their boxes to this day.

The Impreza whizzed up and down mountains, often in blizzards. It was too much to expect the full-time 4WD to stop the car skidding if I swung it too casually around a hairpin bend sealed in ice. But the car imparted a confidence about keeping or regaining control. It gave the same feel when overtaking lorries in high winds on the autoroute, something that always makes me cringe.

THERE WERE mornings when I came out to find the only thing visible on the car through a blanket of snow was the tip of the ski rack. It never failed to start first time or to

emerge from its parking space once the biggest drifts were shovelled away.

On the French autoroutes, the only hassle was keeping an eye on the speedometer, which tended to creep inexorably upwards to a level I hesitate to mention. For there was no hint of straining or shuddering.

The only faults were that the turning lock was not as tight as I'd expected, and the full headlight beam and indicator lights were masked by the steering wheel.

Driving a Subaru Impreza around the hilly S-bends of Monaco caused the occasional second glance from the local young bloods. Only one such car had been seen in the area recently, I was told. That one had won the Monte Carlo rally. Otherwise, its understated look, like most Subarus, was a plus factor.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Rallying to the family cause

THE McRae clan clearly decided to dominate the RAC Rally. Not only did Colin win the Network Q RAC rally event with Alister, his 25-year-old brother in fourth place, but father Jimmy — a former British champion — took the laurels in the classic event in a Porsche 911.

Exhausts fail

THE AA says that 40 per cent of cars fail the MoT because they have polluting exhausts plus one other fault. Seven per cent would not get through because they cannot pass the engine emissions test alone.

Bull bar ban

TWO BIG insurance companies are refusing to offer cover on cars or four-wheel-drive vehicles fitted with bull bars. CGA Direct and Preferred Direct both called this week for the steel bars — shown to increase the risk of death in an accident with pedestrians — to be banned.

Merc success

BRITAIN is now the third biggest market in the world for Mercedes-Benz after the company enjoyed some spectacular sales success. Sales are set to reach 32,000 this year with 1994's record registrations already broken. Only Germany and the United States outrank the UK for sales of Mercedes.

Smooth work

HOW TO impress your boss when Alex Trotman, the British-born chairman of Ford worldwide, paid a visit to the Bridgend engine plant in South Wales, someone put a 2p coin edgeways on a running Zetec SE engine to prove how smooth it was. Trotman was clearly taken with the demonstration — and probably relieved as he gave the go-ahead for £340 million investment to build the engine in Wales.

Coupé killed

FAREWELL to the Audi Coupé. The Germans have decided to kill off their "hot" two-door because Europe seems to have become bored by it after nearly 241,000 sales. The car was popular in the UK where more than 33,600 were sold since launch in 1981.

Vectra orders

ORDERS are pouring in for the Vectra, Vauxhall's replacement for the sales reps' favourite, the old Cavalier. The company took 20,000 orders in three weeks, a third of the European total, for the car, which is in showrooms at prices between £12,235 and £20,345.

Brazil swap

BRAZIL sends us its finest footballer — and they get 30 Essex lads in return. Ford has sent a team of top engineers to São Paulo to set up assembly lines for the Fiesta. They will be there until the spring when the first car rolls off the line — by which time Juninho, Brazil's footballing export to Middlesbrough, should have scored in the Premier League.

AUTOFAX by Les Evans and David Long

RESEARCH BY ZURICH MUNICH SHOWS THAT SAGITTARIANS CLAIM LEAST ON THEIR MOTOR INSURANCE, ASSES CLAIM THE MOST. (CONTEMPORARY, FORDERS FOR THE SIGN OF THE RAM)

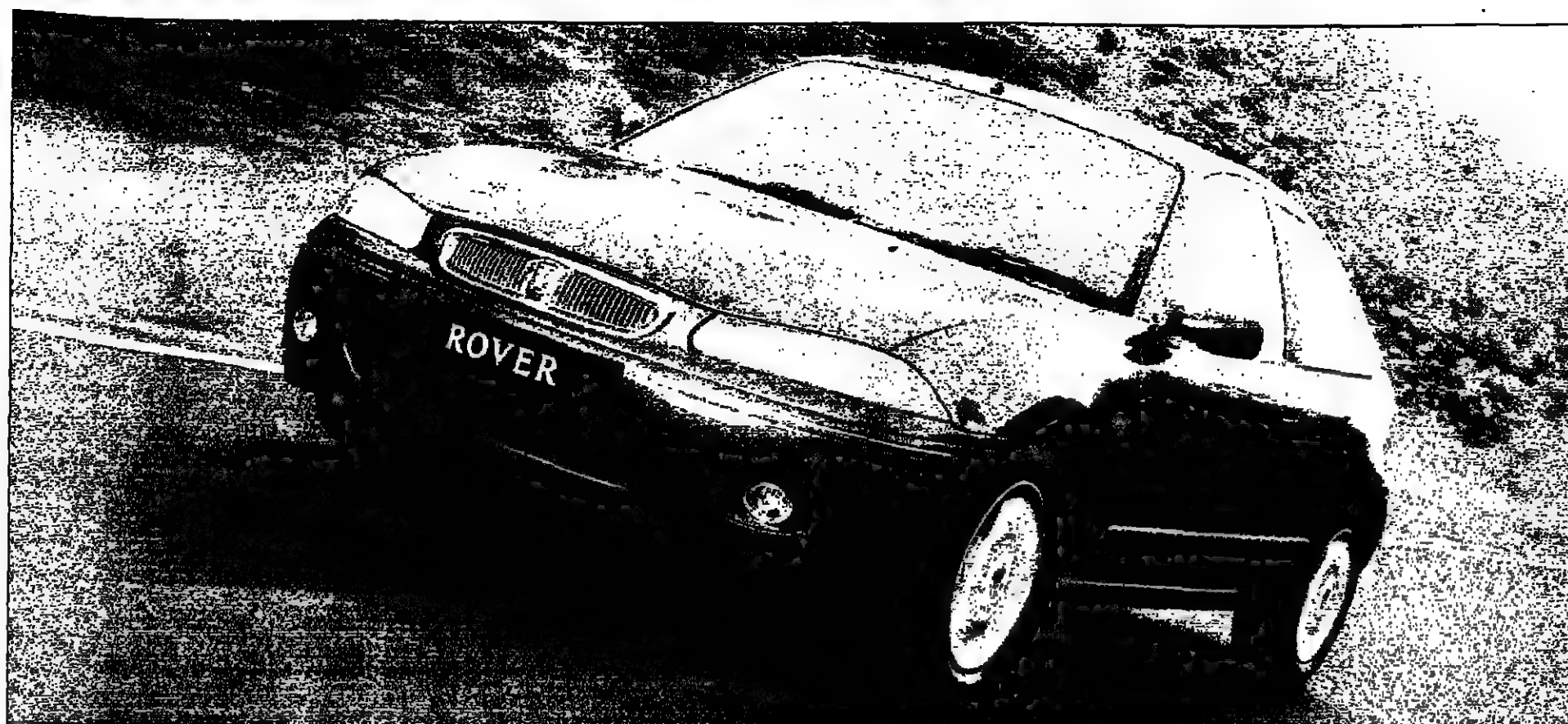
DANIEL DAVID LINDS HOLS THE U.K. AIR SPEEDING RECORD AFTER HIS LAMBORGHINI COUNTACH WAS CLOCKED AT 163 MPH ON THE M4.

AA BOULMAN PAUL WARREN ONCE USED A TORCH TO LIGHT TWO GLASS FRIGGS AFTER SPITTING MOTORISTS' DRIVING THEM ON A MAIN ROAD IN ESSEX.

THE STAR OF THE 1987 PIRELLI MOTOR SHOW A SPECIAL EDITION BENTLEY MCVI CONVERTIBLE, IS UNPOLLUTED WITH 1500 FILIPINO PREGNANCIES.

Ignore the professional critics, says Kevin Eason. Rover's new 200 series is a British stand-alone success

The winner that's all their own work



Definitely one for any road: the Rover 200 series is a stunning achievement with style to turn heads in Italy, and every model in the range cries out to be driven and enjoyed

The camera homed in on the flicker of irritation on the face of John Towers as he played a straight bat to yet another frustrating question.

Towers, chief executive of Rover, was this week launching the company's new 200 series, the culmination of the regeneration of a business that was a down and out 20 years ago. And all the hacks of Fleet Street could do was carp.

Worse still, a BBC camera crew was collecting enough film to stretch about twice around the world by the time they are ready to transmit their fly-on-the-wall documentary on a year in the life of Rover late next year.

The Rover 200 is the first mass production car the company has made alone in 16 years, the first model to roll out without even a chrome strip that owed anything to the long-time alliance with Honda. It is vital that the car carves a place among the Escorts, Astras and VW Golfs that claim the biggest slice of the market for small compacts and Rover wants to make around 160,000 a year, so Towers needed a positive response from the sea of journalistic faces in front of him.

All he got was a torrent of questions: "Was the styling simply a leftover from an aborted attempt to revive the Metro?" and "Where is the British-ness we are supposed to expect from a Rover?" The best way out for Towers was the simplest and most effective: He just let us loose in the car.

And if I might smooth that furrowed brow and put a smile on the face of Rover's chief executive as he faces up to another three weeks of harassment showing the car to the world's press, the 200 is stunning.

The looks, particularly on the cute three-door version, are enough to have had Italian, brought up on a diet of stylish Alfas and Ferraris, turning to gawp during test drives around Genoa. That deep throat of a front spoiler coupled to the now traditional grille are as distinctive as anything on the road, the profile close to Vauxhall's Corsa in shape but the rear sharp and sporty.

The cabin is as welcoming as you would expect in a Rover. Each car, from the top to bottom of the range, gets effectively the same quality trim, the only differences out-

NEW ROVER 200 SERIES	
214i/214Si. Prices: £9,995 to £11,695. Engines: 1.4-litre, 16-valve in 75PS and 103PS form. 75PS figures: 0 to 60mph in 12.5 seconds; top speed, 103mph; fuel economy, 45.2mpg average; 103PS: 10.2, 115mph, 43.7mpg. Insurance groups: 4E and 6E.	
216Si/216SiJ. Prices: £12,195 to £13,895. Engine: 1.6-litre, 16-valve, 111PS for 0-60mph, 9.3 seconds; top, 118mph; economy, 42mpg. Insurance: 7E.	
220D/220SD/228SDi. Prices: £10,495 to £13,295. Engine: 2-litre, 8-valve. Power: 86PS standard and 105PS from turbo-charged version. 86PS version: 0-60mph, 12 sec; top, 105mph; economy, 57.2mpg average; 105PS: 9.8, 115 and 57.8mpg. Insurance: 220D, 5E; 220SD, 6E; 228SDi, 7E.	
200vi. Price: £15,000. Engine: 1.8-litre, 16-valve for 145PS. 0 to 60mph, 7.5 seconds; top, 127mph; economy 40.3mpg. Insurance: 14P.	

lined by engines and specification changes.

The surprise, though, is how big the cabin seems, partly created by the large window area. This is a four-metre-long car that feels like a big saloon: the doors shut with a thunk and the feel of Rover's clever three-spoke steering wheel gives an immediate impression that the car is not only luxurious but means business.

Towers says that the car is designed for a younger audience than traditional Rover buyers used to a steady diet of reliable but unremarkable saloons and hatchbacks. The 200 is the key which should unlock the doors to that audience of 20 and 30-somethings looking for a stylish — and cheaper — alternative to BMW's 3-series engine. Every car in the range cries out to be driven and enjoyed. The base 1.4-litre models have pace

enough for any driver while the 1.6 petrol cars would happily content me in town or on motorway. They cruised quietly and contentedly or could be revved freely as I worked the gearbox on Italy's twisting mountain roads.

There are three diesels in the 12-model range, equipped with Rover's L-series engine. Acceleration from the turbo version is perky enough for a 0-60mph time of 9.8 seconds with fuel



Inner space: the surprise is how big the cabin seems

economy calculated at an average 57mpg.

The flagship car sets the tone for the range though, and Rover will not disappoint drivers wanting to return to "hot hatchbacks" which offer discretion as well as performance. The 200vi gets the 16-valve 1.8 developed for the MGF with enough oomph for a 0-60mph time of 7.5 seconds and top speed of 127mph. Even then, Rover

SHIFTS IN TECHNOLOGY

A system that jumps into a different gear

The car is 100 years old and has had more facelifts than a Hollywood actress on the slide, yet it is at the cutting edge of technology.

And still our left legs push clutch pedals and we waggle gear levers to get our little runabouts around town when we could simply point and press.

In Rover's new 200 CVT, you switch on, put the car in drive and press the throttle. The company has jumped a stage in automatic gearboxes for small cars by offering only continuously variable transmission on the new 200 range. So there are no gear changes, just a continuous band of power from rest to top speed, with no jerky movements between.

The technology of CVT has been around for a long time — long enough to have scared most motorists away from it. But they need not fear, because Rover's new CVT is a remarkable and welcome improvement.

Conventional automatics use a step change, going up and down without the driver needing to push in the clutch but at the expense of performance and fuel consumption. Overtaking, for example, means pressing the throttle hard to the floor to force the gearbox into changing down.

The CVT works on a pulley system through a drive belt which remains the same length whatever the power so that the torque delivery and efficiency remain high through the speed range. The problem

with old CVTs was that flooring the throttle simply raised engine revs until the belt tightened — like running on the spot.

Happily, that fault has been overcome, and Rover's CVT — mated to the 1.6-litre engine — is evidence in the case being built by those who claim that manual gearboxes are little more than a waste of effort.

Rover figures show that the engine will run at just 2,700rpm at 70mph, while fuel economy figures are almost as good as for the manual five-speed box: 54 miles to the gallon compared with 53.9mpg. There is virtually no loss of performance, with 0-60mph coming in 9.8 seconds (9.3 for the manual) and top speed down by 3mph to 115mph.

First moments with the car are curious as the gearbox whines into action. I kept listening for the reassuring clunk of gears, but there was nothing as I pressed the throttle down. Instead, the 200 CVT set off with all the torque I would have expected from a car with a normal manual transmission. The ride was smooth and quiet, and within minutes of hitting heavy town traffic I was converted to the merits of CVT.

The only thing that could put me off is the price: a £940 option on top of the 1.6 range, so the cheapest version would be £13,135 — a little steep for motorists who will probably want CVT on cars which are runabouts.

engineers reckon a driver with a highly-developed sense of how to use the right boot could get just over 40mpg unleaded. Cornering ability is supreme and sale and the car quiet and docile around town.

The 200 really is a breakthrough for Rover, at last proving that it does not need Honda's help to make cars. In fact, the company is better off with its designers and engineers now freed from having

to design models around someone else's chassis and suspension and released to indulge their own ideas.

BMW, Rover's new owner, loved the company's first attempt at making its own car, and even Honda thought long and hard about buying the model from Rover and rebadging it. That is tribute enough, so don't just take my word for it: the new Rover 200 is a winner.

European Car of the Year

Title goes to bravura Fiat twins

And it's two victories in a row for the Italian giant, reports Alan Copps

Bravo and Brava, the clever 3-door/5-door twins introduced by Fiat only two months ago, and available in Britain just in time to catch the Christmas present market, have been named European Car of the Year 1996.

It is the first time that a carmaker has won the accolade, regarded as the premier motoring award, in successive years. The title last year went to the Punto, which so far this year has sold more than 40,000 in Britain. It is also the seventh time overall that Fiat has won. No other manufacturer can claim more than three wins, a record shared by Ford, Renault and Citroën.

The cars compete in the C-segment which accounts for

more than 30 per cent of all sales in Europe. Their rivals include the Ford Escort, Vauxhall Astra, VW Golf, Citroën ZX, Renault's Megane, and now the Rover 200. They have been highly praised for style, performance and economy. By the end of this year, 90,000 Bravo/Bravas will have been delivered throughout Europe. A road test will appear in CAR 95 next month.

The jury for the European Car of the Year award is a 56-strong panel drawn from motoring journalists in 21 countries. The Bravo/Brava gained 378 votes to top a shortlist of five vehicles. The Peugeot 406 gained 363 votes, the Audi A4 246, the Vauxhall/Opel Vectra 217 and the

Mercedes E-class 196. Each jury member had a total of 25 points to award, spread across at least four cars.

The Bravo/Brava is regarded as the first mainstream model to reflect a new and much more individualistic design philosophy at Fiat, in line with a move by carmakers worldwide away from recent much-criticised computer-generated bland vehicles.

The European award follows hard on the heels of three firsts for Fiat in the Autocar awards. The Bravo/Brava won for the design, the company was manufacturer of the year and Paolo Cantarella, chief executive, was man of the year. He will collect the European award at a ceremony in Seville in January.



The individualistic look of the Brava and Bravo: Highly praised for style, performance and economy, 90,000 will have been delivered throughout Europe by the end of the year



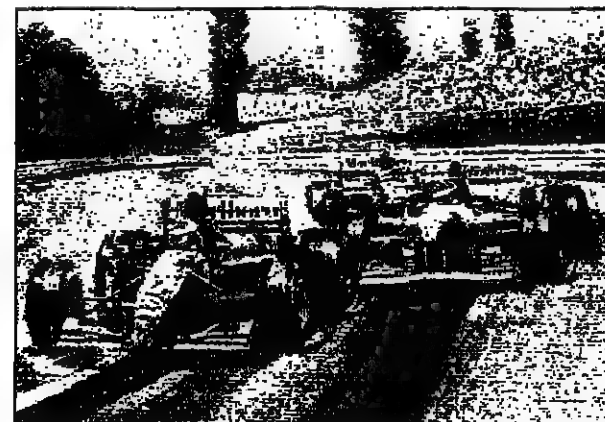
Great moments and legendary drivers are being immortalised in paint. Jennai Cox reports

Capturing the art of motor racing

MOTOR racing enthusiasts find different expressions for their love of the sport. Craig Warwick and Alan Fearnley found theirs in paint and brush strokes. Both artists are racing fans and their work in the growing market for motor art reflects their passion for motor cars and drivers.

Taken to racing events as a child, Warwick continues the tradition to ensure his pictures are technically accurate and lifelike. Sir Jack Brabham bought one of himself recently and many drivers sign limited edition lithographs of their portraits.

Fearnley's interest lies in the machine. As well as painting historic moments in motor racing, from Juan Manuel Fangio's 1955 victory in Argentina to Damon Hill winning the Hungarian Grand Prix in 1993, Eddie Stobart commissioned a series of paintings for the 25th anniversary of his fleet of trucks. But because of the growing demand, Fearnley has to concentrate on cars. Nigel Mansell, Derek Bell and Jackie Stewart all adorn their walls with his work, but others face a three-year wait for a commission.



Jean Alesi leading in a Ferrari 105 by Alan Fearnley and David Coulthard and Damon Hill by Craig Warwick



Grand Prix Sportique, which publishes, promotes and reproduces the artists' work, expects to sell 50 paintings at £295 to £8,750 by today when the exhibition at The Gallery in London's Cork Street ends at 6pm. Only two exhibitions can be held each year — the other is in Monte Carlo — or demand would outstrip supply.

"There is a shortage of good artists in this field and their paintings sell extremely well," says David Mills, managing director of Grand Prix Sportique.

Interest in motor racing art has been gathering pace, particularly since the death of Ayrton Senna, which heightened general awareness of the sport, says Scott Siemers, managing director of the Fine Art Trade Guild.

JOHN Fitzpatrick, chief executive of the British Racing Drivers Club, thinks that cars will soon take over from ships as the fashionable theme for paintings.

"We are always buying them for the club house. They are very popular, espe-

cially the historic ones. They are so much better than photographs."

The Gallery of Fine Motor racing Art, established three years ago in a marquee at the annual Silverstone International Historic Festival, is where an increasing number of motor racing artists display their work. The exhibition, growing each year, is where many display, sell and take commissions for their work for the first time.

"Young artists need to be encouraged into that line. The paintings are going up

in value all the time," says Mr Fitzpatrick.

An international hunt for new talent opens from next May when amateur or professional painters of any age will be invited to submit their work to Grand Prix Sportique on the theme of motor and motor racing. Entries will be judged by the likes of Murray Walker, Stirling Moss and Lord Alexander Hesketh.

For details of the competition write to: Grand Prix Sportique, PO Box 20, Tetbury, Gloucestershire GL8 8ZG.

Saxo: not quite the right stuff

FOR THOSE of you for whom the word Saxo mistakenly conjures up images of the dinner table, meet the car that will bear the unenviable badge when launched here in the Spring.

The Citroën Saxo is coming as a three-door hatchback, bigger than the current AX, smaller than the ZX and fractionally shorter than the Rover 200.

Why Citroën needs yet another small car is yet to be discovered, but engine sizes — 1.1 litre, 1.4 and 1.6 — are already covered by the rest of Citroën's admirable range. A five-door, diesels and new high-performance, 120 horse power, 1.6-litre petrol version follow soon. Sales targets include the Ford Fiesta, Vauxhall's Corsa and the Renault Clio.



Citroën Saxo: a car for all seasons?

But was that name really necessary? Citroën, which clearly has not come across Saxa salt and Paxo stuffing here, says that Saxo has "musical overtones". However, there must be a high chance that drivers confronted with an outbreak of road rage run the risk of being told by salty types to "Get stuffed".

In his series on British motoring giants, Lord Montagu of Beaulieu looks at William and Reginald Rootes



Car dealers extraordinary: William, left, and Reginald Rootes with, clockwise from left, Humber Super Snipe, Sunbeam Alpine, Montgomery's staff car — an adapted Snipe — and the Hillman Minx. Illustration by Philip Castle

The Rootes brothers, William and Reginald, differed from others in this series in that they neither founded companies, like Austin and Morris, nor designed cars for their employers, like Fomercy and Islington, yet for more than 40 years they were among the leaders of British carmakers. Their talent was commercial, first as dealers, then buying up promising companies which they welded into a powerful manufacturing empire. Rootes was a well-established Kentish family with an engineering and cycle business in Goudhurst. They were also celebrated musically, the Rootes Band, formed in 1870, performing throughout the county and beyond. In 1895 the business was headed by William Rootes, father of the brothers, and in that year he visited Britain's first motor show, organised by Sir David Salomons at Tunbridge Wells. This fired his enthusiasm for the motor car, and two years later he added a motor section to his business. In the early 1900s, he became an agent for several well-known makes, such as Napier, Humber and Vauxhall. He was not to know that his sons would eventually buy up Humber and become serious rivals to Vauxhall.

William and Reginald were born in 1894 and 1896 respectively, and educated at Cranbrook School. Reginald was the bright one, though generally more cautious, while William, always known as Billy, was more practical and more adventurous. Their first drive in a car, when they were aged ten and eight, took place when their father

was away, and certainly without his permission. Characteristically, Reginald urged caution, but Billy took the wheel and drove the little New Orleans for some distance before ending up in a ditch. When he was 16, Billy began an apprenticeship at the Singer Motor Company in Coventry, another firm which he would later add to his empire. After three years he decided to set up as a Singer dealer; he ordered 50 Singer Tens before he got his father's agreement that the family firm would sell them. William senior, furious that his son proposed to abandon his apprenticeship, refused to support him. Billy therefore sold a chicken farming business he had started before going to Coventry, and with the £250 raised set up as a Singer dealer himself. He was still several months short of his 19th birthday. Within a short time he had sold all 50 cars, at a profit of £1,500, worth more than £50,000 today.

The First World War interrupted Billy's career, though he profited from it by opening a factory at Maidstone for the repair of aero engines. He was a Lieutenant in the Royal Navy, but presumably obtained extended leave to run the factory. Reginald was a civil servant with the Admiralty, and after the war he left to join Billy and their father in what was now an important dealership. They sold many makes, but the greatest numbers came from America, particularly General Motors products. The Maidstone premises were joined by ones at Rochester, followed by a move to London and a rented showroom in Long Acre. By 1926 even this was not enough, and they took a 99-year lease on Devonshire House in Piccadilly, an imposing building occupying a whole block. Company publicity claimed that it was "the finest building in London"; certainly it was the most magnificent car showroom.

Duties on imported vehicles severely dented sales of American cars, and the Rootes brothers were able to combine patriotism with profit in pursuing an all-British policy. Their leading make was Austin, and in the late 1920s they sold more Sevens than any other company in the world. A merger between Austin and Rootes was considered and urged by the government, alarmed by the effect of an Austin collapse on employment in Birmingham. The merger never happened, but Billy was attracted by the idea of becoming a manufacturer in his own right. He knew that the time for forming a large company catering to the mass market was gone, and had no interest in becoming a small specialist manufacturer. He would have to buy into an existing firm, therefore, and, aided by Reginald's planning and finance from the Prudential Assurance Company, that is what he did.

The Coventry firms Hillman and Humber had merged in 1928. Humber also owning commercial vehicle makers Commer. Rootes sold all three makes, though none was doing very well. Rootes began buying Humber shares in 1929 and in 1932 took complete control. This brought about changes which were not welcomed by Humber enthusiasts, such as the replacement of the faithful inlet-over-exhaust valve engine by a conventional side-valve unit. However, sales did not suffer and Humber continued to be bought by Lord Mayors and the like, even serving as royal transport on several occasions.

The Hillman line was extended to include the Minx, a small saloon in the popular car class designed by A.H. Wilde, whom Billy had lured from Standard. From its launch at the 1931 Paris Salon, the Minx was an instant success and put Hillman in fourth place among British car makers by 1939. Among its innovations in a popularly-priced British car were the first factory-fitted radio (and Melody Minx of 1934) and the first all-synchromesh four-speed gearbox in 1935. Rootes's next acquisitions were two quality British makes, Sunbeam of Wolverhampton and Talbot of London, which had been merged in the Anglo-French STD (Sunbeam-Talbot-Darracq) Group since 1919. By the end of 1934 they were facing bankruptcy owing to their inability to repay a £500,000 loan. Rootes took Sunbeam and Talbot separately, closed the Wolverhampton factory and asked Talbot's Swiss-born engineer, Georges Roesch, to design a popular-priced "luxury sports saloon" to be called the Talbot Ten. This was really a Hillman Minx in a party frock, and the purist Roesch resigned. His larger Talbots soon acquired Humber engines, and the Talbot Ten gave way to the Sunbeam-Talbot in 1938. Enthusiasts for the old-style Humber, Sunbeam and Talbot cars may lament the Rootes takeover, but it gave work to thousands who might otherwise have joined the unemployed.

Fraternal partnership

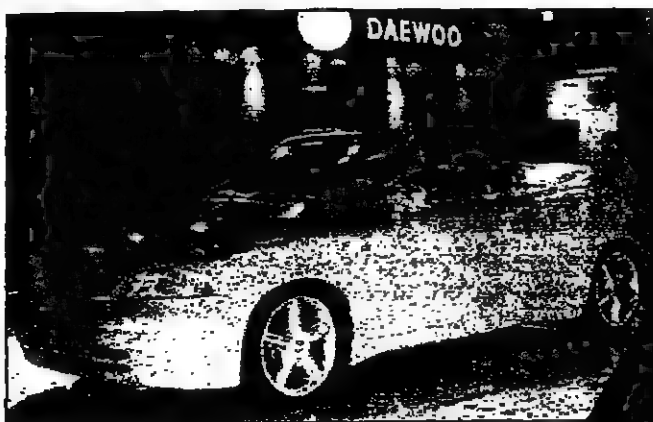
They first drove when they were aged ten and eight

The Rootes takeover provided work for thousands

Daewoo aims to prove that there's more to the marque than marketing

The Korean carmaker has designs on the big league, says Vaughan Freeman

If Mystic Meg could give a glimpse of what the world's most ambitious car companies would be building in five years' time, the revelations would probably look something like the cars pictured here. She might also forecast they would be produced by growth-hungry car firms from America, Germany or Japan. She might be right about the cars, but quite wrong about the identity of one firm. All these cars — and there are dozens more on their Korean drawing boards — carry the Daewoo name, still little known in Britain but with advanced plans to bulldoze its way up the league of leading car manufacturers. Daewoo has poached some of the best-known names in the Western automotive world to help build a motoring empire that within 10 years will be making 2.5 million cars a year at factories around the



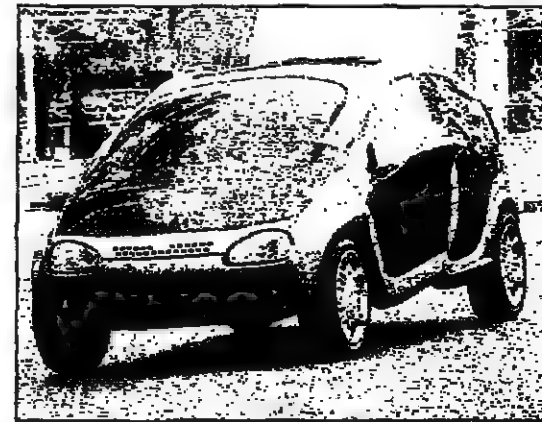
Daewoo convertible and Woo-Choo Kim



limousine to take on Jaguar and Mercedes. Engines for future cars will cover everything from an 800cc to six-cylinder 2.5 litre petrol units, as well as electric cars and vehicles powered by compressed natural gas (a third of taxis in the Korean capital of Seoul are powered by compressed gas). Daewoo is even drawing on the expertise of Lotus Engineering to develop a 12-seat bus. The man now responsible for engineering development at Daewoo is Ulrich Bez, best known for his work when at Porsche on the 911 Turbo, and



On the Daewoo drawing board: concepts for the first sports car to come out of Korea and the micro town car



then at BMW, where he worked on the new 3.5 and 8 Series ranges. Surely Daewoo, which has only been building cars for 17 years and is best known as a manufacturer of low-cost A to B cars with emphasis on the service and support package customers buy with their vehicles, cannot hope to match the engineering excellence and prestige of more established manufacturers? Dr Bez emphatically believes otherwise, and that with the right cars, British motorists, who have bought 11,000 Daewoo since last April's launch, will flock to the marque. While he admits the present Daewoo cars are the four-wheeled equivalent of toasters,

efficient but boring, he adds: "Our cars will have more identity, more character, with a greater emphasis on the feel of the drive, on steering and on handling. We plan not to sell cheap cars, but to offer customers more car for their money, a bigger vehicle and a bigger engine for the same price as smaller rivals." Daewoo's plans are built on highly robotised factories. The Kunsan plant being built on Korea's west coast will make 900,000 cars a year by 2005, but needs only 7,500 workers to do it, about what Jaguar needs to build 40,000 — albeit very different — cars a year. Another successful signing

for Daewoo is Design Forum vice-president Ray Everts, ex-Ford and who led the team that designed the then revolutionary jelly-mould Sierra. Mr Everts says the bland Daewoo is a thing of the past: "We are developing a distinctive look and image, a personality that will be recognisable anywhere in the world. "We are a young company. Some car companies have been around for 50 years and it has taken that long for them to develop their own look. Some have been around for 100 years and keep changing their look. We want to be able to find a design that is acceptable everywhere. If BMW, VW and Mercedes-Benz can do it, there's no reason why we can't. I don't think customers

are after cars that are sleek and trendy. First they want quality, and then they want value for money." As proof of that, Daewoo are taking Western tastes seriously, cars such as the Lexus from Toyota, Ford Galaxy and Renault Espace are among those that have been stripped and minutely examined to see what the competition is up to. If there is a fly in the ointment, it might be that Daewoo group chairman Woo-Choo Kim, has been linked to a £400 million bribery and loan scandal, which has already led to the arrest of former Korean President Roh Tae-Woo. It seems unlikely, though, this will be enough to push the Daewoo juggernaut off-track.

Alan Copps discovers that reality is rather different from official figures in a Citroën ZX

Miles better than expected

In the diesel-versus-petrol debate there is one area where diesel has a clear lead: fuel economy. The argument about environmental and health damage is far from resolved and may be intensified if the duty on diesel is raised, as many have predicted, in next week's Budget.

But if you want to go a long way on as little fuel as possible then, at present, a diesel car is probably the answer. The Citroën ZX estate which I had on a long term test this year proved itself in the course of 6,000 miles a competent family load carrier with zippier performance than most in this class, thanks to the excellent 1.9-litre turbo-charged diesel engine.

In all kinds of family motoring it did everything asked of it in comfort and with impressive economy, but this last is probably the most difficult thing to gauge on such a test because official figures quoted by manufacturers bear such little relation to real motoring.

Under EC rules every manufacturer is obliged to quote fuel consumption figures at a constant 56 mph, a constant 75 mph and for an urban cycle. These Government-approved figures are the results of laboratory tests not of road driving and are useful as a comparison between various makes and models, unaffected by variables like weather, road surfaces and driving ability.

The urban cycle is a complicated formula, impossible to replicate on the road; the higher speed is illegal in Britain, and on our crowded roads where you can go at 56 mph for more than a few yards, let alone miles, without needing to stop, corner or speed up to overtake.

But you can drive at 75 mph on a French Autoroute (the maximum is 130 km/h or 81 mph) provided the weather is dry, in the wet the limit falls to 100 km/h or 62 mph. So the need to travel quickly to the South of France, for a combination of business and family reasons, presented a rare opportunity to double check the 75 mph claim, at least. The method might not pass the most rigorous scientific test but it's about as close as the ordinary motorist will



Citroën ZX: at a constant 75 mph driving through France, the results proved to be nothing less than astonishing

ever get. The results were nothing short of astonishing. The official figure for this car at a constant 75 mph is 44.1 mpg. Its first full service was due at 6,000 miles and I started just 300 miles short of that figure, knowing it would be thoroughly overdue by the time I returned. In my experiment it returned no less than 52.2 mpg.

On the first leg of the journey to Nice I drove as close as possible to a constant 75 mph on the Autoroute that runs from Calais to Dijon. The weather was good, visibility excellent and the road was relatively empty. It is a classic French road, frankly boring but presumably the sort that Citroëns are built for. There are long straights and undulations but nothing resembling a corner or an incline until you get very close to Dijon.

I left the Shuttle terminal at Calais with a full tank. I was driving alone and gave myself half an hour's rest every 200 miles. I got to Dijon in just over ten hours, including the stops. I had travelled 632 miles on 55 litres of fuel.

Now here's a tip if you ever have to make such a long journey alone on such a boring road: try converting miles per litre into miles per gallon in your head. It's not such a difficult sum, you simply multiply by 4.54. But if the answer

CITROËN ZX ESTATE
Engines: 4-cylinder, 1905cc turbocharged diesel giving 92bhp at 4000 rpm.
Transmission: 5-speed manual.
Performance: Max speed 111 mph; 0-60 mph 10.9 seconds.
Economy: Constant 56 mph, 64.2 mpg; Constant 75 mph, 44.1 mpg; Urban cycle, 39.2 mpg (Government figures).
Load space: Height 0.92m; Max width with seats folded 1.35m (1.15m between wheel arches); Length with seats up 0.98m; with seats folded 1.68m. Rear seats split 2/3-1/3. Boot contains storage compartments and luggage net.
Equipment: Alloy wheels; central locking with remote control; anti-theft alarm; power-assisted steering; electric front windows and tilt/slide sunroof with door-open warning display; roof bars.
Price: £13,825.

is so radically different from the one you expect it is guaranteed to keep you alert. To travel 632 miles in 8½ hours works out at an average of 74.35 mph, so I expected the consumption to be in line with the quoted 44 mpg. But no matter how many times I did the calculation in my head, it came out at over 50. In the end I stopped and worked it out on paper: it was 52.2 mpg.

I have double checked the figure since and can find no potential source of error, unless one of the fuel pump readings was seriously wrong — unlikely. It was clear there was nothing inaccurate about the mileometer or the trip recorder.

On the return journey, there was no deadline and I took a completely different route, the first part on a spectacular Alpine road full of hairpins, with frequent stops including an overnight, and on the second day the weather varied from grim to appalling, so my average speed was nothing like as fast and was very far from constant. Nevertheless, in 838 miles the ZX used just 92 litres of petrol, which works out at 41.3 mpg. And when the service came almost 2500 miles late it cost just £50. In the 8,000 plus miles we had it the ZX had required no oil and no water. Its alarm was too sensitive to cope with being parked on a London bus route, but apart from that it provided comfortable reliable family transport. I was sorry to see it go.

Helen Mound investigates a change in technology that tells motorists what to do in an emergency

It's a horrible feeling, sitting behind the wheel of your car, listening to an ambulance siren wailing in the background; it's getting closer, but you can't see it and you haven't a clue which direction it's approaching from.

You know you should get out of the way, but don't know if it's in front or behind. Frustrating isn't it? Not to mention dangerous: in America last year there were 537 accidents and 62 deaths involving ambulances on emergency calls. But work is now under way to change the sound of emergency sirens to inject an element that will make it easier for drivers to identify the direction.

Sound specialists have tried hundreds of different noises for sirens from screaming women to elephants trumpeting, believing they needed more startling noises to get quicker reactions from other road users. Now Dr Deborah Withington, an auditory physiologist at Leeds University, who has been studying the problems motorists have with emergency service sirens for two years, has come up with one you can locate accurately.

She is surprised that no one has addressed the problem before, and believes that previously researchers were trying to solve the wrong problem. "They forgot to consider the basic element of sound," she says. "Motorists get in the way because they can't locate the noise and they're confused, not because they haven't heard it."

Four traditional types of sirens are used by the three emergency services around the world and all suffer the same problems; they are known as the "high-low", a two-tone siren; "pulsar", popular in America; "wail", favoured in Europe; and "yelp" common in the UK. "The human ear needs a broad frequency range to be able to locate a noise, but modern sirens traditionally have a very narrow range, 0.5 to 1.8 kHz," says Dr Withington. The car can pick up frequencies from 20 Hz to 20 kHz. White noise — the disturbance on a radio or TV — covers all frequencies, which means it can be accurately located. But it

A new way to hear the siren song



"The biggest problem we found was locating a siren when it's in front or behind. It has to do with the timing and intensity cues of the sound. If the ambulance approaches from the left or the right, the sound's cues will reach the relevant ear first, indicating which side it's on. However, the front and rear cues are identical, so you can't tell whether it's approaching from the front or behind."

Her new multi-frequency siren is locatable as well as alerting. It incorporates two loud wails to get motorists' attention and a burst of white noise for localisation. The chances of drivers locating an ambulance with the new siren are doubled, as test drivers proved when they selected the correct direction 88 per cent of the time.

"Ambulance drivers are under pressure to ensure 70 per cent of all responses reach the scene of an accident in four minutes, and they are continually slowed down by other drivers. A locatable siren will mean fewer obstructions, getting them there quicker and safer."

Dr Withington also believes that a new siren should try to differentiate between the emergency service, alerting other motorists to its location and whether it is signalling fire, police or ambulance.

"Currently a fire engine siren in Leeds could be on an ambulance in London or a police car in Cardiff. If drivers knew in advance a fire engine rather than a Panda car was approaching, they could make more room for it."

Tests are being carried out on West Yorkshire's roads with Dr Withington's new siren fitted to ambulances and videos are recording other road users' responses. If all goes well, police and fire departments are also likely to employ the new sirens. Interest has spread as far as ambulance services in Australia. The only problem with the new siren is the name; currently the locatable siren is known as the whah, whah, whah.

"We're holding a competition at the moment to come up with a more professional sounding name," says Dr Withington.

Forgot to lock the car after parking it a mile away? Vaughan Freeman has a futuristic answer

Secured by everything except a key

How often, gazing idly out of the train buffet or office window as the rain starts, have you realised that a few hours earlier you left your car with the sunroof gaping invitingly open?

In the catalogue of motoring disasters, soggy upholstery is just one of many. The other, as you make your way back to the city centre parking precinct and peer across acres of identically coloured and shaped cars, is that you have not a clue where you parked, or even which of the seven levels you were on.

But within five years you will be able to phone your car from anywhere in the world, and tell it to close its sunroof and windows to keep out rain — or more maliciously-minded intruders. You will also be able to dial it up if you are in "lost-car" mode and tell your car to flash its lights and honk its horn so that you can spot it no matter where in the multi-storey or hectares of airport car park it is located.

No longer will motorists have to fret about security and keys when leaving their car first thing in the morning at the dealers for the six-month service. They will be able to lock the car securely, wait for the mechanic to call them at the office or on the train, and then "ring" the car and tell it to open up its doors.

At the same time, the advent of the keyless car will mean the end of the car key as we know it. Instead, every car and car owner will have their own transponder fob. Having left the car, the fob passes out of range of the car, which then automatically locks itself. As the owner returns, the fob electronically tells the car to open up and disarm the engine immobiliser.

without inserting yet another key that is prone to loss, breakage or duplication. The advances will cost little — only £30 in the case of the dial-a-car system — and are being developed by Ford and partners.

The dial-a-car system is based on the sort of pocket-sized pager used now to receive messages while you are on the move. Using a mobile or conventional phone, the car owner calls a central communications centre. The motorist is then put through to the car via the nearest transmitter mast, having dialled the right security number. By punching numbers on the phone, vari-

ous messages can be relayed to the car. The system can even be activated by computer users contacting their cars via a modem link. The paper built into the car's electronics receives the messages, then tells the car's electronic systems what is required. When not in use, the pager can be used as a conventional pager, mounted on the dashboard.

Aaron Osman, of Ford's Advanced Vehicle Technology Electronics Systems research department, says an owner could even call the car and tell its engine immobiliser to stop the car and lock all doors if it had been stolen. "On a cold

day the owner could phone ahead to turn on the car's heater, or the air conditioning on a hot day."

Mr Osman and his team are also working on the keyless car. "Fob technology will spell the end of the car key as we know it," he says. The system is based on an electronic "clever" key fob — but without the key — which the car owner simply carries around.

When the motorist approaches the locked car, the presence of the fob completes a "loop" by reacting to a transmitter in the car and to a receiver. The fob and the car

"talk" to each other via the transmitter and receiver, the fob reacting to the car's beam, identifying itself, and then transmitting the correct open-sesame code to the receiver.

The fob tells the car to unlock the doors. Once in, because the car "knows" that the rightful owner is inside, there is no need for a secure ignition key. Instead, the motorist can turn a new-style ignition dial which allows accessories such as the radio/cassette or heater to be run or for the engine to be started — all without a conventional key.

USED CAR BRIEF

TOYOTA COROLLA
The Corolla has a solid reputation for reliability and economy. It's a good choice for a first car or a family car. The 1.6i 16V is a great choice for a first car. The 1.8i 16V is a great choice for a family car. The 2.0i 16V is a great choice for a family car. The 2.0i 16V is a great choice for a family car.

GOOD NEWS
All cars in the range get a 3-year warranty. The 1.6i 16V gets a 3-year warranty. The 1.8i 16V gets a 3-year warranty. The 2.0i 16V gets a 3-year warranty. The 2.0i 16V gets a 3-year warranty.

SAFETY
The Corolla has a solid reputation for safety. It's a good choice for a first car or a family car. The 1.6i 16V is a great choice for a first car. The 1.8i 16V is a great choice for a family car. The 2.0i 16V is a great choice for a family car. The 2.0i 16V is a great choice for a family car.

REPLACEMENT PARTS
The Corolla has a solid reputation for reliability and economy. It's a good choice for a first car or a family car. The 1.6i 16V is a great choice for a first car. The 1.8i 16V is a great choice for a family car. The 2.0i 16V is a great choice for a family car. The 2.0i 16V is a great choice for a family car.

OVERALL
The Corolla has a solid reputation for reliability and economy. It's a good choice for a first car or a family car. The 1.6i 16V is a great choice for a first car. The 1.8i 16V is a great choice for a family car. The 2.0i 16V is a great choice for a family car. The 2.0i 16V is a great choice for a family car.

50 '94 ESTATES/PEOPLE MOVERS

MODEL	Oct-94	Nov-94	Chge
Audi New 80 2.0 E estate 5dr	14550	13995	-3.81
Audi S4 estate 5dr 6 speed	28750	28250	-1.73
BMW 518i Touring 5dr	16850	16250	-2.40
BMW 525i SE Touring estate 5dr	29000	22500	-2.17
Citroën ZX 1.4i Reflex estate 5dr	7495	6995	-6.87
Citroën XM 2.0 V6X Turbo estate 5dr	14985	14485	-3.33
Fiat Tempra 2.0 IE Station Wagon 5dr	8395	8275	-1.42
Ford New Escort 1.8i LX estate 5dr	8750	8395	-4.28
Ford Granada Scorpio 2.0i 5dr Auto	16595	16595	-4.21
Honda Accord 2.2i SE 5dr	16795	16750	-0.26
Lada Riva 1500 E estate	3595	3575	-0.53
Land Rover Discovery 300 TDI 5dr	18650	18150	-2.68
Mazda 626 2.0i estate 5dr	11550	11150	-3.46
Mercedes Benz E220 estate 5dr Auto	23750	23500	-1.05
Mitsubishi Space Wagon 2.0 GLX 5dr	13395	12995	-2.98
Nissan Sunny 1.8 LX estate 5dr	8875	8595	-3.12
Nissan Primera 1.8i SLX estate 5dr	10550	10150	-3.79
Nissan Serena 2.0 SLX 5dr	13295	12850	-3.34
Peugeot 405 Cabriolet 5dr	11750	11250	-3.87
Renault Espace 2.0 RN 5dr	14850	14250	-4.04
Renault Espace 2.9 RXE 5dr Auto	19595	19495	-0.51
Rover 416 SLI Tourer 5dr	10395	9950	-4.28
Skoda GLX estate 5dr	5425	5350	-1.38
Subaru Impreza 1.8 GL 4WD estate 5dr	9795	9450	-3.52
Subaru Impreza 2000 4WD estate 5dr	14995	14495	-3.33
Subaru Legacy 2.0 4Cam Turbo 5dr	15850	15450	-2.52
Toyota Corolla 1.3 GL estate 5dr	9450	8995	-4.81
Toyota Carina E 1.6i LX estate 5dr	9950	9425	-5.27
Toyota Camry 3.0 V6 estate 5dr Auto	18095	17095	-5.52
Toyota Previa 2.4 GL Auto	17795	17450	-1.93
Vauxhall Astra 1.4i LX estate 5dr	8550	8225	-3.83
Vauxhall Astra 1.7i TD estate 5dr	8575	8095	-5.81
Vauxhall Omega 2.0i 16V GLS estate	14750	14250	-3.38
Vauxhall Omega 3.0 V6 Elite 5dr Auto	22500	21250	-4.49
Vauxhall Monterey 3.2i V6 16v 5dr	17895	17295	-3.35
Volkswagen Passat 1.8 CL estate 5dr	11085	10595	-4.50
Volkswagen Passat GL TDI estate 5dr	12895	12350	-4.22
Volvo 850 2.5 20V GLT estate	16895	16450	-2.64
Volvo 850 2.0 20V SE estate	16895	16750	-0.85
Volvo 940 2.0i Wentworth estate 5dr	16295	16195	-0.61
Volvo 960 24V estate 5dr Auto	21250	21000	-1.19
BMW 520i Touring 5dr Auto	20250	19850	-3.45
Ford Mondeo 2.0 GLX 5dr Auto	11085	10495	-5.40
Mercedes Benz E320 estate 5dr Auto	31250	30750	-1.60
Land Rover Discovery 3.9 V8 S 5dr	18850	18395	-2.41
Renault 21 Diesel RTD estate 5dr	10195	9950	-2.40
Suzuki Vitara J1X SE 16V estate 5dr	11850	11350	-4.21
Austin Montego 2.0i Countryman	9095	8575	-5.71
Mitsubishi V6 24v coupe	15195	14395	-5.26
Rover 216 Cabriolet	12295	11750	-4.43

THE motor auction business is booming as activity in the used car market continues to outstrip that in the new car sector, according to the latest quarterly report from HPI Equifax, the vehicle information company, which offers checks on the identity of vehicles both to private buyers and the trade.

The auction market was benefiting in particular from an increasing preference by fleet managers and motor dealers to use auctions as the quickest method of disposing of their vehicles. The report also showed that more people were buying second-hand vehicles through dealers (53.7 per cent) than privately (42.3 per cent).

"The outlook for the used car sector remains good, with buyers increasingly turning to the consumer protection offered by buying from a reputable dealer, rather than running the risks of the private used car market," says Tony Worthy, HPI's managing director.

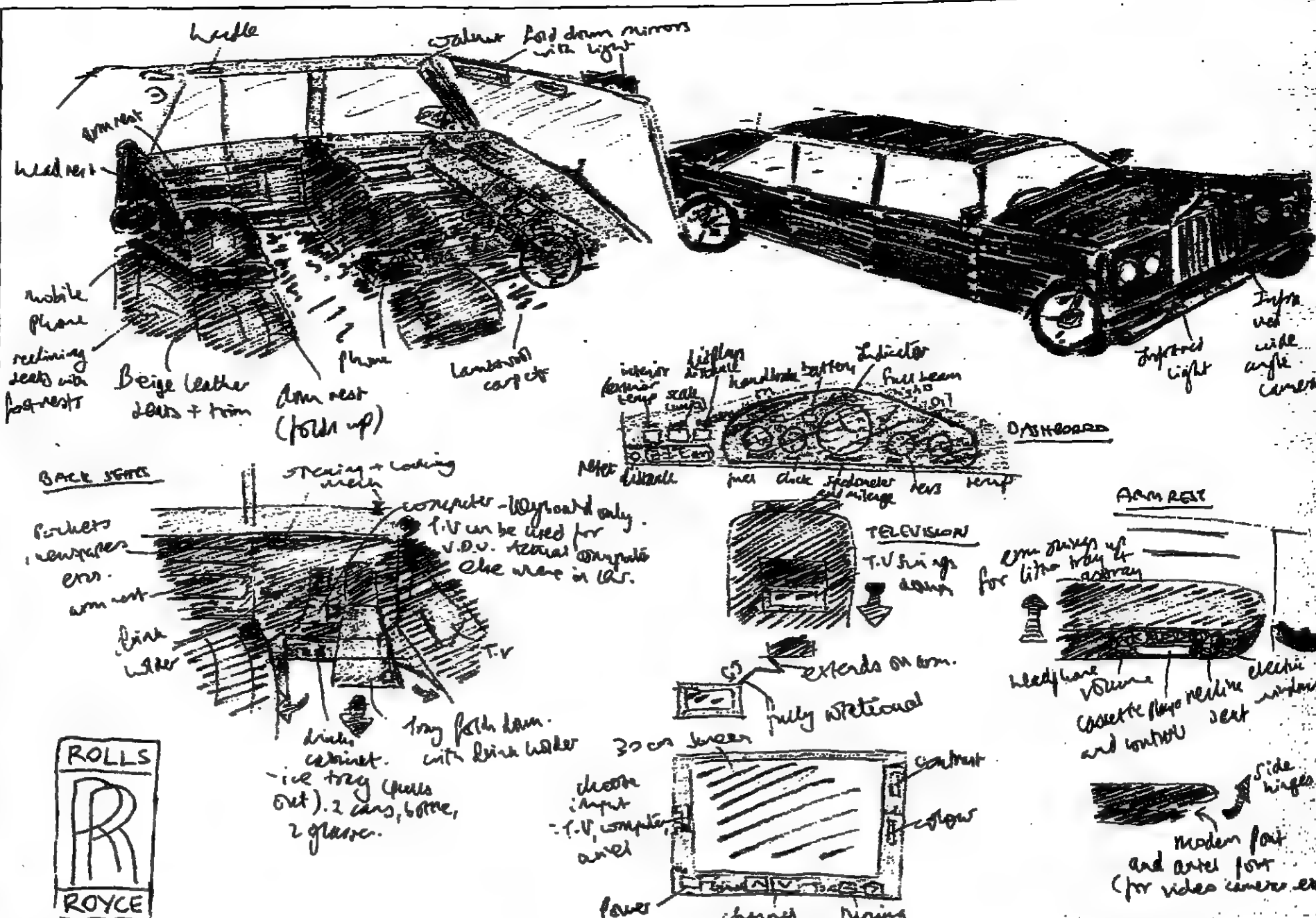
HPI Equifax, 01722 422422.

Your vision of tomorrow's high Rollers

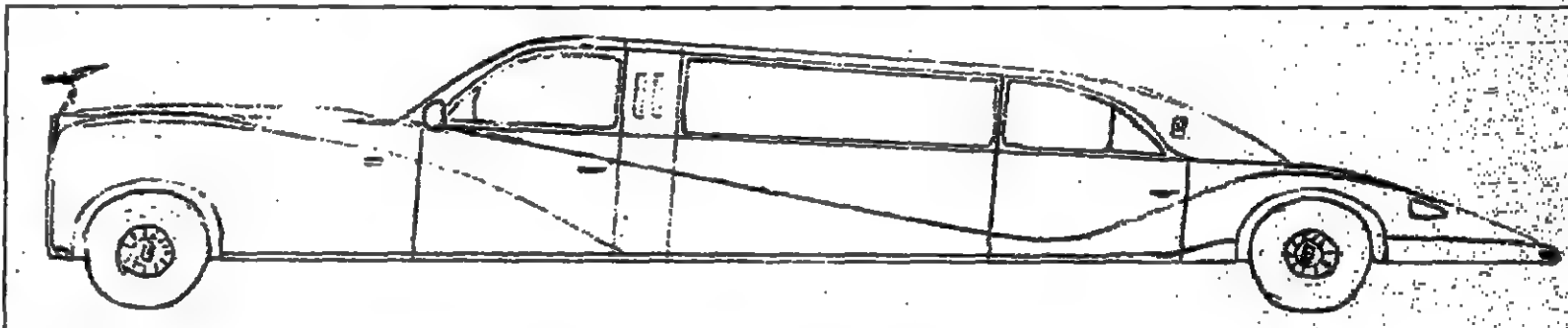
His eyes lit up when he saw the "shape of things to come" suggested by Nicholas Mo-

an infra-red vision aid for the driver to computer games and a drinks cabinet, won the day and the prize of a Spirit of Ecstasy mascot which will be winging its way to him soon.

John Spence, right and below, offered a steering wheel that switched from side to side, while Nicholas McVeigh, far right, married age-old elegance to new ideas



For the motorist who has everything: Peter Wilkins's winning entry offered every comfort, from an infra-red vision aid for the driver to computer games and a drinks cabinet.

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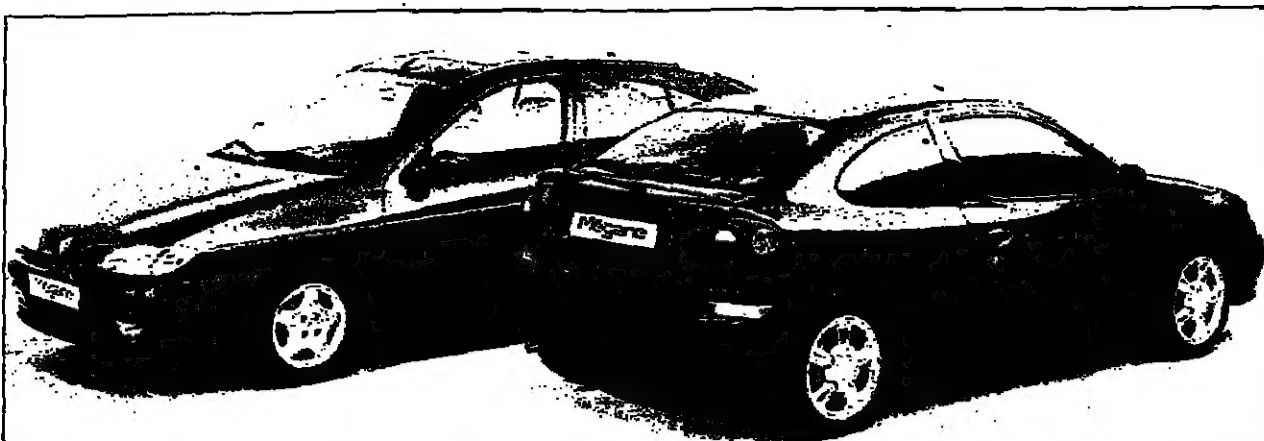
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Megane: Gallic roots and character without alienating international taste aimed at the Escort-dominated market

Une, deux, trois, quatre... cinq

Renault has given birth to quins called Megane. The R19's replacement is not so much a model range as a family of concepts, five in all, each with its own style and character. Judging by the hatchback and coupé I drove in Spain, the saloon, monospace and cabriolet that follow will be highly individualistic cars — just as Patrick Le Quément, Renault's British-taught design chief, pledged.

The really clever trick, which Renault appears to have pulled off with flair, is to reinforce the Megane's Gallic roots and character without alienating international taste. The Megane is aimed at the Escort-dominated small-to-medium market and is geared for a four-million run.

You can tell from the lip-curling visage — more snarly than on the bland 19 — that the hatchback and coupé are siblings. Although all Meganes are built on the R19 floorplan, differences in tyres, suspension, power and equipment reinforce strong visual identities.

The style-first coupé — short, chunky and very fetching — puts looks before loads, so it's cramped in the back and the boot opening is more slot

Renault has
had quins
and, says
Roger Bell,
they are all
individuals

than cavern. There's no mistaking its rounded rump and distinctive circular rear lights. The mainstream Megane, the least adventurous visually, has been stretched to create what Renault describes as class-leading roominess. I couldn't argue with that, sitting with knee-room to spare behind a six-foot driver. Access to the huge boot is through a low-lipped, high-rise tailgate, and the spare wheel is now inside, not slung beneath as bait for thieves.

My first taste of Megane motoring was at the (adjustable) wheel of a five-door 1.6, powered by a new 90bhp variation of Renault's Energy engine. First impressions, usually telling, were favourable, not least because the Megane destroys any lingering doubts about quality. There is not-

ing remotely tatty, inside or out, about this French car. The fit and finish achieve Japanese benchmarks. Noise is well suppressed. Although the engine booms a bit when raced, there's little wind whooosh at motorway speeds and the tyres were quiet on the rough roads of southern Spain. To press-launch a car in Andalusia is to have great confidence in its suspension. That of the Megane — R19-based in principle, though entirely new in detail — smooths away surface aches at least as well as any rival family holdall.

The pliant ride is complemented by embracing seats, height adjustable on some models, and an excellent driving position. Comfort is perhaps the Megane's best suit, circles and ovals its strongest design theme: they dominate the impressive dash, polarising opinions aesthetically, if not ergonomically.

Power steering and a smooth, ball-free gearchange make the Megane light-touch easy to conduct within city limits. Beyond them, it is the fluent and consistent way the car corners that endears it to keen drivers. Body lean is well

RENAULT MEGANE

Engine: 1596cc, four cylinders, 90bhp.
Transmission: Five-speed manual gearbox, front-wheel drive.
Performance: 0-60mph in 11.3 seconds, top speed 144mph.
Economy: Fuel consumption (UTAC average) 41.5mpg.
Dimensions: Length 162.6ins, width 66.9ins, wheelbase 101.6ins.
Price: To be announced.

checked, tyre grip tenacious. The Megane is as dynamically forgiving as it is passively safe: apart from dual airbags and weight-increasing body strength (which blunts performance), all Meganes have new "programmed" seat belts with tearaway anchors that cushion the jolt of restraint in a crash. Other novelties include wipers that speed up as the car accelerates, and new fingertip audio controls.

Of the four Meganes I drove, my favourite was the 2.0 litre coupé, which seemed to go almost as well as the more muscular version of the Clio Williams' twin-cam 2.0 engine without the hysterics. It also rode the bumps better than the firmly-sprung, handling-biased 1.6, which dispatched corners like a slot racer. Terrific fun, this 134mph top speed, but a mite wearing as everyday wheels.

Bill Cockburn, new chief executive at W H Smith, talks to Andrew Pierce

Post haste from Edinburgh

Can a postman deliver the goods at W H Smith? Bill Cockburn, new chief executive of the Post Office, has accepted one of the most challenging jobs in British retailing. He is to become the chief executive of W H Smith.

Mr Cockburn, 52, has worked for the Post Office since he left Holy Cross Academy Roman Catholic grammar school in Edinburgh in 1961. He has only limited retailing experience, but there are lucrative rewards for his move. His salary will increase by £179,000 to £425,000.

It did not take him long to make his mark at the Post Office. At 28 he became personal assistant to Sir William Ryland, the chairman, and a director 10 years later. The Royal Mail now handles 67 million letters, a 50 per cent rise on 10 years ago, and increased profits by 54 per cent to £472 million.

He has moved a long way from his working-class origins. The son of a hospital porter, Mr Cockburn was brought up in a high-rise flat and then a four-bedroom council house with his five brothers and two sisters.

He has already moved into the Chelsea headquarters of W H Smith and has two months to learn about the business before taking over the hottest seat in retailing.

How did you first learn to drive?

I bought a cut-price package of three lessons, followed by a test three years later. The package was prematurely terminated by a highly stressed examiner. There were two further attempts before I made it. My wife and daughters rubbed salt in to a wounded ego by passing first time.

What was your first car?

A 1964 Vauxhall Viva. It was washed and polished lovingly each week. My unending affection was repaid when it slid into a garden wall,



Bill Cockburn and his MGVR: "Unlike me, my daughters look the part to drive it"

destroying most of the spotlessly clean body panels. Despite cosmetic surgery to its body, the love affair was over.

What car do you drive now and why?

A Jaguar Sovereign for journeys in suits and a MGVR for fun and showing off in casual gear with either of my two lovely daughters by my side. The problem is that they want to drive it and, unlike me, they look the part.

Do you like driving?

You bet. And fast when there is the opportunity. Always within the law of course.

What is your dream car?

A sleek McLaren sports car. Watch out Damon!

What is your most hated car?

Competing courier company cars which cut up Royal Mail

STEERING COLUMN

postal vans and discharge horrible choking fumes into the bargain.

What is your worst habit in the car?

Giving my elder daughter, Rachel, advice on her driving which, I hate to admit, is much better than mine.

What infuriates you most about other drivers?

When they drive too close for comfort and speed past on the inside lane with two fingers raised.

What is the most unusual thing you have done in your car?

I once got my kilt tangled in the gear stick, which had highly revealing consequences for my passenger. My wife,

Susan, thankfully bridged the gap with her handbag.

Have you ever had points on your licence?

Alas, for speeding. We were all doing it, but the coppers picked out my skid rack and that was it, despite politeness, charm, compliments and downright creeping.

What do you listen to in the car?

Eric Clapton, Eric Clapton and Eric Clapton.

If you were Secretary of State for Transport, what is the first thing you would do?

Reduce city centre congestion to enable Royal Mail vans to deliver on time.

What is your favourite car advertisement?

I love Nicole, although I am old enough to be her Papa.

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When buying a legend be sure of its history.

Dripping with chrome, the 1950s Cadillac oozed style. David Thompson found a survivor in 1990s London

American dream machine



Forty-six years ago, on November 25, 1949, the one millionth car rolled off the production lines of The Cadillac Car Company in Detroit. It was the start of the great American postwar car boom.

Harley Earl, one of the greatest car stylists of all time, was in the designer's seat at Cadillac and the postwar American public wanted their luxury cars big, covered in chrome and gleaming like shiny aircraft. They wanted status and respect, and Earl's fabulous creations achieved all this and more.

He became known as the "King of the Fins", as rear wings grew to resemble aircraft tail-planes. Yet he had the gift of fluid streamlining, so his designs never looked out of proportion.

His dislike of rust and a penchant for shine led to a "chrome frenzy" that kept the special metals industry alive. His designs became ever more elegant. He brought the wings closer to the car's bodyline and made bumpers more "wrap-around".

So what a surprise to see a

Cadillac from this era in the street the other day, attracting much attention from "Rolling" shoppers (Rolling refers to the phenomenon of Rolf Harris jumping around repeating, "Have you guessed what it is yet?"). "Fifty-seven Chevrolet", yelled one. "Pontiac... Chrysler!" shouted others. It was, in fact, a 1953 Series 62 Cadillac Coupé de Ville.

Following this 1950s "automotive-museum" down the road, you half expect it to screech to a halt, with Gene Hackman leaping out, armed to the teeth and yelling at everyone in sight. In reality, one Simon Prentice, a Japanese interpreter, slides from behind the wheel.

"I first became interested in owning a stylish 50s or 60s car when I read a book in Japan, entirely dedicated to gleaming chrome car grilles, especially American ones. What fascinated me was the fact that someone actually designed and built something as fantastically outrageous as this," he says, pointing at just over 19 feet (or two tons) of Detroit chrome.

"Returning from Japan two



Simon Prentice and his Cadillac Coupé de Ville, equipped by "King of the Fins" Earl Harley with rear wings like aircraft tail-planes and room for everyone in the trunk

years ago, I found a shop called Dream Cars in Battersea, which had just imported this Cadillac and I thought well, why not? This particular model — of which 14,550 were built — used to belong to an Elvis impersonator in Palm Springs, California.

The style is set by gleaming "Dagmar" bumpers, gigantic chrome projections designed for "protection". From elephants, perhaps. But it also has some astoundingly advanced features, that match the mood of the styling to a tee. When do you think power windows were invented? 1930? 1970? 1965? This car has all four of its windows hydraulically powered, with a bank of four switches at the driver's left elbow. At a touch, they silently retreat into the body,

to make a seamlessly elegant pillar-less coupe.

Even more amazing is the self-tuning radio. At the touch of a button, this valve-operated unit searches for the next strongest station along the dial, just like a modern radio.

The transmission is not just automatic, it's Hydra-Matic. This is a superb velvety smooth gearbox, operated by a lever on the steering column.

Then there's the "E-Z" Eye tinted windscreen, which does an excellent job of reducing the sun's glare. Original cost \$46. Don't forget the "Autronic Eye", a little safety device that automatically dipped the headlights when it detected on-coming traffic at night. Original cost, \$53.

Under the bonnet nestles — or rather relaxes — a 210 horsepower 5.4 litre V-8 engine that has its origins in 1914. It is

essentially the same engine that powers today's Chevrolet Corvette, albeit in that form with 380bhp on tap. Like most V-8s, this one has a glorious gurgling sound, that's deep enough to set off car alarms. This ultra-reliable unit was

used to power the M24 light tank.

Harley Earl's graceful styling is everywhere. The exhaust pipes subtly discharge through the chrome-plated ends of the bumper. The fuel filler cap is discreetly hidden

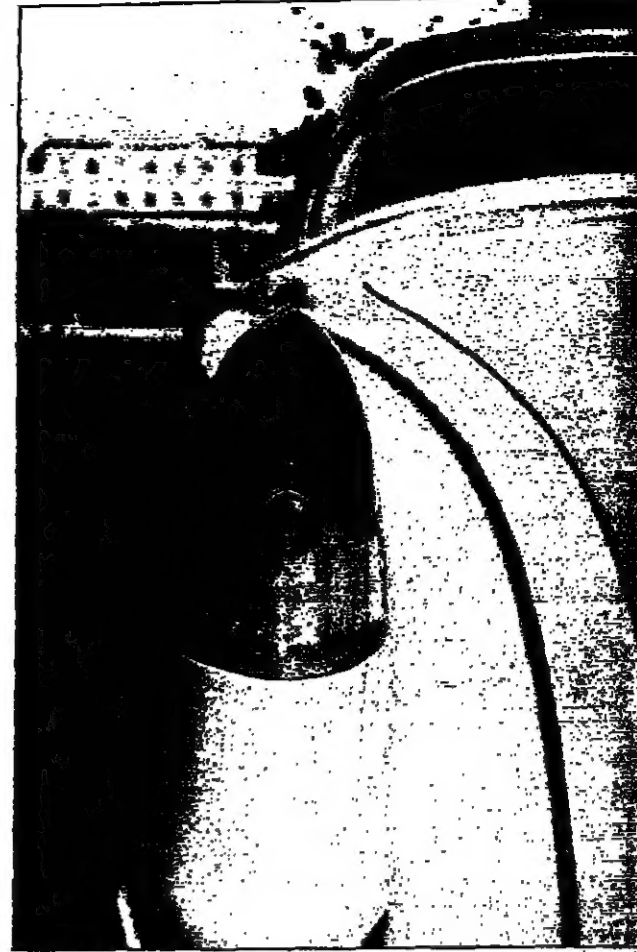
underneath one of the tail-lights, requiring a push on the secret button to reveal it.

Opening the door to go for a spin, you wonder if it's stuck? No, it's just that it weighs about the same as a Nissan Micra — and it still shuts

perfectly. Firing up the motor takes two or three attempts, but it rumbles into life like a defibrillated dinosaur.

The thin Bakelite steering wheel takes some getting used to. Though it is a fairly accurate system, with variable power assistance, it responds a bit like the helm of a small yacht, so city navigation needs forward planning. Simon scowls at my boating reference and proudly relates his own scrape-free tours of narrow city streets. But put your foot down and it does feel like a yacht. The Caddy majestically lifts its nose, sniffs the air and thunders down to the next buoy, oops, I mean bend.

My drive is over, all too quickly. Stopping this beautiful machine takes a hefty push on the brake, but is relatively fuss-free. Pity they don't make 'em like that any more.



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Fiesta 1.8 Del (90/92) Nova 1.2 (91) Peugeot 205 XL (91)	145 x 13 (S/T)	£17.99	£27.99	£36.99
Astra Merit (90) Mazda 1.3 (90/93) Escort GL (90) Golf 1.3 (90/91)	155 x 13 (S/T)	£17.99	£28.99	£39.99
Golf 1.8 GL (92/93) Peugeot 306 1.6 XL (93) Astra GL (93) Renault 19 GTX (90/93)	175/70 x 13 (S/T)	£24.99	£34.99	£49.99
Escort XR3i (90/91) Golf 1.8 GTi (92) Peugeot 205 GTi (90/93)	185/60 x 14 (H)	£32.99	£49.99	£62.99

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